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QUESTIONS OF THE DAY
IN
PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

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BY
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TO

THE MEMORY OF MY BROTHER

S. EDGAR STEWART, B.A.

WHO FIRST AWAKENED MY INTEREST IN PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS, AND WHOSE NATIVE CAPACITY FOR SUCH STUDIES I HAVE SELDOM SEEN SURPASSED

PREFACE

THESE essays are in the main an expansion of a course of public lectures which I delivered in this University during the winter of 1910–11 under the general title: "Some Recent Philosophical Movements." In the case of Nos. V. and IX. I have availed myself freely of material which I had already published in another form in the *Hibbert Journal* and the *International Journal of Ethics*: for permission to do so I am indebted to the courtesy of the Editors of these magazines.

A considerable proportion of the audience to which the lectures were addressed consisted of persons possessing little previous knowledge of the subject, and the essays as now published are intended to be intelligible to the general educated reader. To those versed in the technicalities of philosophical discussion this must be my apology for the popular style in which these papers are written.

I am well aware that the book is lacking in unity. But while the subjects treated are miscellaneous I have endeavoured to keep a single purpose in view. It is now admitted that, for good or for evil, psychology has come to occupy a position very different from that which it held a generation ago. The change is generally ascribed to a transformation of method which, although it has been effected

gradually, is profound and far-reaching. I have tried to estimate in the first essay what this transformation means and how far it is to be welcomed. In the remainder of the book an attempt has been made to illustrate the argument of the opening paper by showing how new light is now being cast by psychologists on some very old and previously obscure problems in the theory of knowledge and in the social sciences. If I have included discussions which are not *prima facie* germane to psychology it is because I am convinced that the sphere of application of that science is still indefinitely wide.

I acknowledge with gratitude my obligation to several friends who have helped me in the preparation of these essays for the press. Dr. Hastings Rashdall has read through in MS. Nos. V., VII., VIII., and IX.; and Dr. William McDougall has rendered me a similar service in respect of the remainder. While the responsibility for the opinions expressed is of course exclusively my own, I am deeply sensible of how much I owe to the suggestions and criticisms which they have offered; and the reader will at once recognize how much I have been influenced by the psychological and ethical teaching of their published books. To Professor John Park, my senior colleague in the University of Belfast, I owe a general debt which can be appreciated only by those who have been brought into contact with his immense stores of philosophical learning.

My former pupil Miss A. J. Kennedy, M.A., has devoted unsparing pains to the preparation of the index and the verification of references; and I have to thank my colleague, the Rev. Canon O'Connell,

M.A., Lecturer in Celtic Languages, and the Rev. F. E. Harte, M.A., for their kindness in reading the proofs.

HERBERT L. STEWART.

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QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

IN

PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

I

THE REFORM IN PSYCHOLOGY

THERE is no more striking feature in the present state of the philosophical sciences than the immense impulse that has been imparted to the study of psychology. Fifty years ago this subject was viewed with profound distrust, and was even treated by metaphysician and scientist alike with no small measure of contempt. James Ferrier in a well-known passage alludes to it as "this specious but spurious science," and in defining the task of the philosopher he gravely includes among his duties that of refuting the errors and heresies of pyschology. It is true that writers of metaphysical treatises commonly thought it necessary to devote a few chapters to the nature and functions of the soul: keen Aristotelians could not forget or ignore the fact that their master had written at large "*De Anima*": but the work was so perfunctorily done as to justify in great measure the lack of enthusiasm with which it was clearly regarded by the authors themselves. In Great Britain the intellectual revolt headed by

John Stuart Mill for a time promised much; but when the famous psychogonical method became discredited as a principle of explanation, the position of those who had throughout protested against the empirical study of mind became in one sense stronger than ever. The subject returned to its former place as the Cinderella of the philosophical disciplines, for the extraordinary conclusion was drawn that bad psychology was to be cured not by better but by something that was not psychology at all.

A glance at the shelves of a library to-day will show how radically the situation has been transformed. That science which was at one time scarcely permitted to live at all, has been advancing and developing out of proportion to any of its kindred. It no longer acknowledges a subordinate title to existence held in fee from the metaphysician: it stands by its own right, works by its own methods and announces its own results as free from any overlordship as is physics or chemistry. It has successfully invaded the sphere of other disciplines—it can claim with some show of reason, that the progress which these departments have apparently made is in reality the progress of the psychology on which they depend: it can prove that neither in Ethics, nor in Jurisprudence, nor in Economics, can its conclusions be safely neglected: and it can point to theory after theory, once respectable but now acknowledged error, which arose from some false psychological assumption. It is scarcely too much to say that, so far as the science of education and the science of society are really progressive and illuminating studies, it is psychology that has given them birth. An experimental side has been developed with remarkable rapidity in recent years, and if it is still premature

to claim any very striking or sensational results from laboratory work, it is at least equally premature to deny that such results are possible. The growth of the subject has been such that it has become necessary to divide and subdivide into specialized departments; as Professor Stout well puts it, "The time is rapidly approaching when no one will think of writing a book on psychology in general any more than of writing a book on mathematics in general." [1] And though deprecating voices are, as we shall see, not wholly absent, we seem very far removed indeed from Ferrier's conception of a "specious but spurious science," or from the notion that there is any other philosophical discipline charged with the task of refuting it.

It is always a somewhat sterile question to ask whether great movements are related as cause or as effect to the great men who further them. But it is unquestionable that modern empirical psychology has attracted to its service in recent years men of rare scientific ability. It would be invidious to draw distinctions among the living, but one may safely say that the progress and the application of psychology as now understood are intimately connected in the minds of all with the name of an investigator whom we have lately lost. It is too soon to forecast the place which the future historian of the science will assign to William James. One may question how far the fascination which he wielded was due to his original contributions to the study, and how far it arose from his genius for exposition. His style was his own—fresh, vivid, brilliant, with some imitators, but no rivals. That he made mistakes, and many of them, will not be held a reproach by any one who

[1] "Analytic Psychology," Preface.

knows how commonplace and routine must be the work of the psychologist who makes none. James was a pioneer: progress, daring progress, was a necessity of his intellectual life. That throughout the English-speaking countries, and in no small degree outside them, he arrested for his subject the interest and attention of multitudes is beyond doubt. Much of his work is probably ephemeral: if I am right in believing that part of it will enter into the permanent treasury of knowledge he has indeed high honour; so candid and disinterested an inquirer would himself have been the first to set the torch to the stubble.

How, then, shall we explain the change of attitude that has become so conspicuous—the new valuation of psychology in the philosophical world? The language of some writers on this matter implies that a science unheard of before has somehow sprung to birth within the last fifteen or twenty years. I think, however, we ought to deprecate the use of any such title as "The New Psychology." Professor Münsterberg has thrown out a very broad hint that even as we have in journalism such a thing as the "Yellow Press" it is possible for philosophy to acquire yellowness in the same sense. And Professor James once chilled an audience that was ready and willing to regard him as a sort of necromancer by stating that so far as he was aware no such thing as "New Psychology" existed.[1] There is an unfortunate tendency to-day to speak of the development of a science as if it were a kind of fresh brand. But it is surely preferable, if one can, to preserve continuity with the workers of the past rather than to affect the airs and fashions of an intellectual *parvenu*. We do

[1] "Talks on Psychology," p. 7.

not compromise the claim of modern astronomers to have improved greatly on the methods of their predecessors by refusing to speak of the "New Astronomy." And if modern psychologists make use of comparison and experimentation to a degree undreamed of by the psychologists of the past, there is no reason why they should be ashamed of the historic succession in which they stand. Professor Titchener as he measures reaction-time with his electric clock and makes records with his ergograph, or Professor Störring as he studies aphasia in the hospital and hallucination in the asylum may be unlike enough to Aristotle, as he drew fine distinctions to his class in the Lyceum between *αἴσθησις*, *φαντάσια* and *νοῦς*; but the contrast is at least equally striking between the earliest and the latest mathematicians, or even between the physiologist of to-day and Harvey or Malpighi. The instruments are improved, but we may well be proud if we can say that the spirit has been preserved, and I think few will suggest that the native capacity has increased.

At the same time it is perfectly true that the last quarter of a century has witnessed in the department of psychology a transformation that is both broad and deep.

I

The task of the psychologist is now separated in a more radical fashion than ever before from the task of the metaphysician. This very necessary delimitation of spheres has introduced clearness where there was formerly confusion; his own field is now assigned to each of two workers, who in the past wasted much

of their time in thwarting and embarrassing each other.

The propriety of keeping the two provinces distinct has indeed always been in some sense recognized. Systematic treatises on metaphysics since the time of Aristotle have commonly explained with great care that the subject they expound differs from psychology in ways which they proceed to specify. But from the standpoint of psychologists to-day the distinction has very frequently been mis-stated, and still more frequently the only respect that writers have paid to it has consisted of this formal acknowledgment at the beginning of their books. They first mark off the spheres of the two disciplines by limits that are not properly limits at all, and they afterwards disregard the artificial barriers that they have themselves set up.

It will scarcely be questioned that—however they might verbally repudiate it—the task of the Faculty psychologists was really to present in a particular way the metaphysics of the soul. I do not on that account deny value to the work they did. My complaint is that they attempted to do two sorts of work at the same time; and the result was an inevitable confusion. They set themselves to describe the processes of mental life, and they employed naturally that method of introspection which alone was at that period understood as the instrument of psychological inquiry. The instrument has never been used by more acute and subtle analyzers. They arranged, classified, and named the phenomena of consciousness. They brought to bear upon the original chaotic mass of sensations, ideas, emotions, volitions and all the rest, that scrutiny which physicists were bringing to bear upon the equally bewildering chaos of the world

of nature. They reduced these processes to the minimum number of fundamental modes, and made them available for reference by the invention of a nomenclature which should at once record and stereotype the results of analysis. A delicate and flexible vocabulary is no slight contribution to the progress of thought.

But the real interest of these workers in psychology lay far outside the borders of psychology itself. Determined above all things to find philosophical support for the dogmas of the Church, it was all but impossible for them to work at an empirical science which touched these dogmas at so many points with the detachment which is vital to the discovery of truth. Thus, their classifications of psychological fact were constantly such as implied a particular metaphysical position. With ready-made doctrines about Essence and Existence, about Substance and Accident, about Causality, about Finite and Infinite Spirit, they could not approach the phenomena of mental life apart from the purpose of fitting these formulae upon them. I do not say whether or not the formulae were valid, but I do say that they have no place in the investigations of an empirical natural science. Their presence there is an intrusion, and it had the same kind of result in psychology as in physics. Just as the work of Copernicus was hampered for so long by ontological speculations about the circle as the perfect figure, so the progress of mental science was embarrassed by the doctrine that the soul must be an 'immaterial substance,' and that as every substance has its attributes, so the soul has its ultimate "Faculties," whose enumeration and arrangement is the great task of psychology. Thus they were everywhere theorizing where they believed

themselves to be merely describing : they were begging the question where they thought that they were merely stating a case. Without a word of warning they pass backwards and forwards between the pyschological and the ontological plane of discussion : the science becomes in their hands simply a branch or sub-division of General Metaphysics : and it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the distinction which is grounded merely on material or extent is not the distinction which has been found so fertile in the last generation. Nor was the attempt of the Schoolmen and their disciples to separate "Rational" from "Empirical" Psychology any real anticipation of the later standpoint. For any one who studies the empirical treatment by writers of the mediaeval tradition will observe that it is similar only in name to what is understood by empirical methods to-day. Throughout the hand of the metaphysician lies heavily upon them ; he is constantly there, taking bearings, introducing assumptions, dictating the very terms in which the questions shall be propounded.

But if the scholastics disturbed their psychology with their metaphysics, it is equally true that the disciples of Locke and Hume disturbed their metaphysics with their psychology. They quite rightly conceived it to be their business to deal with mind by the methods of a natural science. They also quite rightly determined that whatever the psychologist's metaphysical opinions may be, he must not import into his science any presuppositions borrowed from such a quarter. They understood what one might call the principle of the psychologist's independence. What they did not realize was that in a very important respect the metaphysician is also independent of *him*. For, in claiming the privileges of a natural

scientist, one must also accept a natural scientist's limitations. Those limitations are found in the initial postulate which is granted to him—a postulate to which he has a perfect right so long as he remains within his own sphere of inquiry, but of which he must be sharply reminded the moment he oversteps its borders.

The history of philosophy records many attempts to construct a complete theory of reality, either out of the results of a particular natural science, or, more frequently, as in the case of Spencer, out of the results of all the natural sciences viewed in connexion with one another. In every such attempt there is a πρῶτον ψεῦδος: the disasters which have overwhelmed empiricism from the days of Protagoras to the days of Mill, are bound to repeat themselves as often as the fallacy is perpetrated afresh. A natural science necessarily assumes, on the one side, a world of objects, and, on the other side, the knowing activity of the mind itself by which these objects are apprehended. No advance in systematizing either the objects by themselves, or the cognitive processes by themselves, can overcome the ultimate dualism that subsists between them. For that dualism which the method involves can by no dexterity be explained *by* the method. Progressive unification of experience, however far it may proceed, will find on its hands at the end that schism between subject and object on which "experience" must throughout ground itself.

It is just this scientific dualism which sets to metaphysics its central problem. When we wish an explanation of this puzzle and are referred back to that way of thinking in which the puzzle originated, we have asked bread and been given a stone. For example, the world of the physicist consists of matter

and motion which he conceives as existing in and for themselves and requiring for theoretical purposes no other sort of fact whatever. He abstracts from every aspect of Reality except the extended and the resisting. So long as he remains a physicist he is justified in this assumption. The moment he tries to turn his physics into a metaphysic, hopeless inconsistency reveals itself. For mark what happens. He argues that the facts as known to him are the basis of all other facts: that is, that all phenomena are forms more or less disguised of physical process, special combinations of matter and motion. What we call a living animal, and what we call a volition or a decision are "explained" as being "really" or "ultimately" nothing but a particular combination of moving molecules. Mind is the subjective appearance of that which in and for itself is matter: and matter is that which resists and is extended. How, then, does it come to *appear* other than what it *is*? If I say that the colour yellow is the way in which certain sorts of ether-vibration affect a perceiving consciousness I have made a statement that can be understood: if an appearance is subjective, not objective, this invariably implies that the real nature of the thing is cloaked or masked by the forms of the consciousness to which it is presented. But there is no sense whatever in the suggestion that consciousness is itself subjective appearance, for there is no subject whose illusion it could be. Resistance, in short, is not an absolute but a relative term, which loses all meaning when thought of apart from any consciousness that feels it; and the history of materialism is just the history of one attempt after another to conjure an explanation of mind out of a process in which mind is throughout assumed.

The attempt to construct a metaphysic out of psychology is not a whit more promising. For the world to which we are there introduced consists of the experiences of particular minds. The psychologist's task is to seek out the laws to which such experiences conform. But while an idea is for him nothing but a fact in the mental life of an individual it is for metaphysical purposes much more. It has not only a content but a reference. "A consciousness of green is not a green consciousness." A world within over against a world without is as much a postulate of psychology as a postulate of chemistry; in some sense or other it is an ultimate deliverance of thought upon experience, and it is a task of metaphysics to inquire *in what sense precisely* this dualism is to be construed. But the psychologist who argues that the real world is nothing but bundles of sense-experiences gluing themselves together by inscrutable laws of association is using his science to subvert that principle which the methods of his science have taken for granted. So far I am entirely in agreement with the protests which are being raised by the so-called "New Realists." They quite rightly object to the practice of "dealing with knowledge as if it amounted only to a systematic connexion of mental phenomena"; but I cannot agree that because some psychologists have thus transgressed the limits of their science, we should return to the barren psychology of a bygone age. Much harm may have been done, but it is not beyond repair. The intrusion of the methods of one study upon some other study to which they are inapplicable does not injure merely that study upon which the intrusion is committed. There is an inevitable reaction upon the methods themselves; when their limits are forgotten their

meaning and purpose become rapidly misconceived. But the admission that the empirical study of mind must settle undisturbed its own problems in its own way, by no means implies that there are not other problems which it cannot settle at all, and which if it attempts to settle them will waste its energies and unfit it for its proper task.

The true principle of separation then between psychology and metaphysics, the only principle which is really serviceable, seems to lie in distinguishing, not the material studied, but the standpoint and purpose of the study.

In material they constantly overlap; but their ways of regarding the material are so radically different that a statement may be right if looked upon as a piece of psychologizing, and wrong if looked upon as a piece of metaphysics. To Mr. Prichard this seems a perfect paradox, and later in this paper I shall consider at length how much force his objections contain. Meanwhile, let me offer an illustration from another science which seems to me analogous. Much recent research in physics has been directed towards the discovery of the ultimate constitution of the atom. The question clearly does not admit of direct investigation: atoms cannot be isolated and examined. What can be done is to frame a tentative hypothesis, and proceed to test it by inquiring whether it explains those assumed properties of the atom which in turn seem themselves to explain the physical properties of bodies. Consequently, the whole treatment must be highly speculative and open to many kinds of error. Forty-five years ago Lord Kelvin propounded the Vortex Theory which by its boldness and originality attracted much attention; but it was quickly seen that while

this hypothesis covered some properties which the atom was believed to possess it could give no account of others: in particular it could not be reconciled with the facts of radiation, and with the results of spectrum analysis. I understand that in the estimation of physicists the Electron Theory now holds the field, although it also has its difficulties, for example inability to account for the phenomena of the X-rays, Whether any new conception may be found more satisfactory than either of these time alone can tell. We are entitled to say that the whole question is still *sub judice*.

Physics, however, is not obliged to stand still until this problem has been determined. It has humbler, but not less fruitful, work to do than such probing into ultimate mysteries. And those patient investigators who established Joule's equivalent and Ohm's Law are in no danger whatever of having their results invalidated by any discoveries in these ethereal regions. They are so far from having to wait anxiously the outcome of such speculations that the propounders of Electron theories and Vortex theories must far rather take heed that they themselves are not in conflict with some empirically established law. Though the mystery of the constitution of the atom should be for ever unexplained, the phenomenal qualities of matter can none the less be successfully studied; and such study is an indispensable preliminary to any cosmic scheme that can hope to stand. It is indifferent to most of the inquiries that are now being pursued in laboratories whether the atom be in the end explicable by one hypothesis or by another. The old conceptions of Force and Energy and Mass are sufficient counters to use while such final puzzles are deferred, though they should

have to be deferred indefinitely. In other words, in every science work may be carried on at different levels, the assumptions made on one level are challenged and investigated on the level immediately above it, and progress could scarcely be more effectually barred than by confounding the levels.

Such confounding is exactly what has been done as between the two studies, psychology and metaphysics. The work of Lord Kelvin on the atom is related to the empirical investigations in the same sort of way in which the speculative metaphysics of Spinoza or Hegel is related to the inquiries of the introspective, the comparative, and the experimental psychologist. If the metaphysician has some way of knowing what mind is otherwise than by patiently collecting the phenomena of mind, at least he cannot deny that his theory when produced ought to *cover* the phenomena, and that the man who has arranged the phenomena in classes and groups can give him a negative test by which his theory may be verified. And, on the other hand, the psychologist, when he is tempted to make a metaphysic out of his psychology would do well to remember that the physicist can neither prove nor disprove the hypothesis of Electrons or of Vortex-rings until he advances beyond that plane of thought which takes phenomenal matter for granted.

A notable case of the confusion which I have in mind is to be seen in that controversy about subconsciousness which we shall study in a later essay. On the one side we have the metaphysical dogmatist who refuses to consider the empirical evidence at all. "The soul," he says, "is a unitary substance": consequently it is impossible that it should be disintegrated, and wherever it appears to be so the

occurrence must be a purely physical abnormality in the brain. Or, again, "the essence of the mind is to think; but to think unconsciously is a contradiction in terms: there can be no idea in the mind of which the mind is not aware; hence there are no unconscious mental modifications." The result of criticism like this has been that not a few persons have simply refused to acknowledge the existence of mental phenomena which are found every day in the study of pathological cases, which any one who chooses can verify for himself, and which are by this time as well attested as the performances of Atwood's machine. To such a pass is a critic brought who presumes to know all about what the mind can and cannot do without acquainting himself with the empirical facts. And on the other side of the controversy we have a dogmatism that is not less extravagant. It has become convinced that in all of us a complicated mental life is being lived unconsciously. And it states this result by declaring the mind to be a "whole" with many "parts"—one fragment only is above the conscious threshold, by far the larger section is active in regions that can never be introspectively explored. In the Rev. R. J. Campbell's interesting but deceptive metaphor, the mind is like a coral island whose tip only is above sea-level, and which stretches below to unknown depths of ocean. This is vivid and striking as psychological description: but it could never have been turned into a metaphysical formula except by persons profoundly unacquainted with metaphysical difficulties. It is a naïve common-sense application of the categories of whole and part; but how can such categories possibly meet such a case? How can one consciousness be a fragment of another consciousness? How can one

mind be inside another? As the Bishop of Down very pertinently puts it: "Is personality in space?" And if it be not in space what becomes of the formula which speaks of it as "divided," or as "in parts"? Is not the separation between one mind and another the most radical breach that experience anywhere reveals? Might not one as well speak of adding together the political opinions of two persons and making a total political opinion in which both elements preserved their independence? Surely not the least of the advantages which one receives from a metaphysical training is to be forced to realize that metaphor is a good servant, but a tyrannical master.

The view then for which I am pleading is that psychology should be allowed to do its own work, but that it should not be allowed to attempt more. It deals with consciousness as one kind of empirical fact among other kinds of empirical facts. For it there exist minds, not Mind.

Neither psychologist, nor chemist, nor biologist, nor any other worker in the special sciences is *eo ipso* concerned with the riddle of the universe. Every one of them is supplying to those who *are* concerned with this material and data which cannot safely be neglected. Probably the psychologist is going to supply evidence which touches the final construction more nearly than the evidence that comes from any other quarter. But he, too, must live and let live. To the metaphysician who presumes to direct him he may well reply that his interference would be just as much and just as little in place if he were bothering the chemist among his test-tubes and his retorts with conundrums about the One and the Many. But he must at the same time, and for the same reason, concede to the metaphysician that the study in which

the natural sciences are all alike criticized cannot itself be finally judged by any of them.

In the end the justification of a claim like this must come from success. Has the psychologist shown himself able to use his freedom to advantage? For answer I appeal with confidence to the work of the last quarter of a century, during which the subject has been pursued in and for itself.

To begin with, we have had the gain which always arises from a legitimate division of labour. No one had guessed how rich a field of pure psychology was yet unexplored until the search was taken up by men who were fascinated by psychology alone. There are not a few persons with little interest and less capacity for system-building on the great scale, who have yet a subtle power of mental analysis and an untiring energy in the collection of hitherto unnoticed facts of mental experience. One of the best fruits of this independent psychological movement has been the establishment of the Society for Psychical Research. It represents the first organized attempt to bring together and to classify just those kinds of psychic fact which will *not* fit the ancient grooves of theory, and which the ancient formulae will not cover. It sets them forth in all their shameless irregularity; it invites and welcomes all criticism that is relevant, but speaks plainly about criticism of other sorts: and once a really new, that is a previously unacknowledged type of mental process has been shown to exist, it cries "Hands Off" to those—and they are many—who would force the facts at all costs back into the Procrustean bed. Already amid many protests whose echoes have yet scarcely died away it has established telepathy as a principle of explanation. It has disentangled from amid the

myths of the credulous and the frauds of charlatans the kernel of truth in hypnotism, and it has found there the clue to some curious and baffling enigmas. It has taken up the hypothesis of subconsciousness, has patiently amassed facts from every quarter, has revised the hypothesis over and over again as the data seemed to indicate, and by this time has convinced all whose prejudices are not proof against evidence, that here lies a track to genuine discovery.

Nothing illustrates better than the work of this society the importance of detachment from metaphysical assumptions. The best collectors of data have often been those who had no theories and who would have resented perhaps with heat the suggestion that they had any metaphysical convictions whatever. The blinding power of a theory is almost incredible: persons of ordinary honesty in the affairs of life, once they have espoused a dogma will, all unconsciously, invent, suppress, or distort facts, and suborn evidence to a degree that must be seen to be believed. No one, whatever his opinion may be upon the highly controversial matters which are raised by the Society for Psychical Research, can fail to notice that much of the criticism which that body has to meet springs from nothing but the mental obsessions of the man with a cut-and-dried system. The evidence for telepathy has become more and more overwhelming; but how long was it discounted by persons who had no better reason to give than that it did not consort with their "general scheme of things"? And those who were once most sceptical about telepathy are eager now that it has become a part of their "scheme' to explain anything and everything in terms of it. If we have caught the genuine spirit of psychical research we shall take care that our discoveries are

not dishonoured by being erected into new dogmatisms. They must not blind us to fresh facts which they cannot explain even as the old dogmatisms so long blinded us to themselves.

That independent attitude of mind of which this is a conspicuous illustration has borne fruit in many other fields besides that of abnormal psychology. We are working our way for the first time to a genuine treatment of the emotional and volitional life. Of this I shall have more to say in another section. We may congratulate ourselves that there is now at our disposal an accumulation of knowledge about mental processes such as was possessed at no previous period in the history of our science. Much of this store is still waiting to be reduced to order; much of it has conferred upon us as yet only negative advantages. But as James used to say "facts are facts, and if only we get enough of them they are sure to combine." That we have already got so many of them is due primarily to our determination to search for them with disinterested minds, and to sit very light indeed to the venerable "systems" which the facts seemed to threaten.

But we have by this division of labour not only got rid of much bad psychology; we have got rid and are getting rid of much equally bad metaphysics. For, protest as they might against the heresy of grounding metaphysics upon psychology, not a few of our system-builders did so ground it in the sense that their theories contained latent and unacknowledged psychological assumptions.

When one remembers those resounding doctrines of the Absolute which so many pious persons believed to be doctrines about God, one cannot but feel that their authors must have been as unenlightened

psychologists as they were unorthodox theologians. They really managed to believe in the existence of a timeless, feelingless, will-less, Reason 'whose only occupation it was to be an object to himself,' and who for purposes that no one could fathom, and by means which no one could understand or even guess at, "reproduced" himself in finite creatures which were essentially in time, glowing with emotions, and striving towards ends. Mr. F. H. Bradley is in this respect by no means the least of the sinners, but I believe he has somewhere coined an aphorism on which he would do well to reflect: "A man may say what he likes but to say certain things is not to think."

II

As the character and purpose of psychology thus became transformed it was obviously expedient and even necessary that it should alter its methods. If it is to be one of the natural sciences clearly it ought to avail itself of those instruments of investigation which the natural sciences have so thoroughly perfected. That it has done and is doing so with ever-increasing success is a striking confirmation both of the reality and of the advantage of that change which we have been tracing.

Little advance could be made in such a study as physics if we were forced to wait until those phenomena, whose causal connexions we wish to detect, present themselves spontaneously. For even when our patience is rewarded by their appearance we find them so intermingled with and so disguised by other facts and processes that we cannot easily separate the elements either of the complex antecedent or of the complex consequent. Our success depends upon our

being able to produce physical phenomena artificially, under conditions arranged to facilitate the investigation we have in view. We understand thoroughly those circumstances which we have ourselves created; thus we can introduce a definite, quantitatively determined, factor into a pre-existing situation and observe the change in the effect.

Psychology long lingered in that more primitive stage where one simply watches what happens without attempting to control or regulate it. It relied solely on introspection; and it is scarcely to be wondered at that so little progress was made until this method was improved upon.

For the ancients were quite as competent to employ it as we are, and long ago they had reaped the entire harvest of psychological theory which tillage of this kind could produce. Since we have learned, however, that psychology is one thing and metaphysics another, we have begun to adapt our methods to our material. There never has been and there never can be such a thing as experimental metaphysics. It has even been suggested—and with much plausibility—that metaphysics might be negatively defined as being "such knowledge of matter, mind, and their relations as is not based upon or justifiable by particular empirical cognitions." For it is of the essence of experiment to vary the circumstances: obviously, therefore, experiment is of no avail where the circumstances are fixed and unalterable. If changes are taking place we may note the laws in accordance with which they come and go: this is observation. If the changes are to any extent modifiable at will we can introduce definite variations and note definite results: this is experiment. But both methods must be futile if you have to do with that

which *ex hypothesi* does not change, with the permanent amid the flux, with the unity amid the differences.

Psychology, on the other hand, is now attempting to reinforce introspection both by experiment and by comparison. The first laboratory for this purpose was established by Wundt at Leipzig about forty years ago. To-day, in the United States alone, there are fifty similar institutions, similar, I mean, in aim, but, as one might anticipate, far more elaborate and far more effective in machinery. There is an obvious reason why this way of studying mental process could not have been undertaken much earlier than the latter part of the nineteenth century. Physiology had not until then supplied the necessary data. We cannot experiment upon mind itself, only upon *embodied* mind; hence we were obliged to wait until our knowledge of the brain and nervous system ceased to be of that vague and useless kind which preceded the great discoveries of Johannes Müller and Gall. "We have," writes Dr. McDougall, "three great principles, the principle of the specific energies of sensory nerves, the principle of strict localization of cerebral functions, and the principle of association, each of them arrived at independently of the others, and each founded on a great mass of empirical evidence. Together they constitute the indispensable basis of physiological psychology."

In the absence of such definite knowledge experimentation must have led to hopeless blundering. For we have to deal with a compound process, involving both neural change and psychic change: we have to discover what precisely is the part played by each, what are its laws, and especially, how it is related to the other. Now it is plain that little

progress can be made in determining the relation between two things if you know nothing of either of them taken by itself, but are forced to examine it in a situation where it is bewilderingly intertwined with the other. In this case we should have been exposed to two kinds of error: we should either have invented complicated psychic laws to account for events which are quite simply explained by nerve-process, or, in speechless admiration of a machinery which we did not understand, we should have accepted all sorts of marvels as wrought by the nervous system alone. The physiologists and the anatomists have done much to help us out of an otherwise insuperable difficulty. They have given us some fundamental facts of a purely physical nature—facts which are indeed all too sparse, but which constitute, at least, a basis.

The science of psycho-physics has sprung from the attempt to look at the results of introspective psychology in connexion with these and similar principles of nerve-action. The two bodies of knowledge could not long be kept in water-tight compartments: for they both related to one sentient experience. And the moment they were brought into touch with each other a host of new questions suggested themselves. On the one side we have nerve-stimulus and on the other we have sensation. Speaking roughly and within limits the stronger the stimulus the keener the sensation. But are they connected by a precise ratio? If we replace a weight of four pounds on the back of the hand by a weight of eight pounds, will the intensity of the feeling be doubled?

This raises the crucial difficulty of psycho-physics. Can we speak of psychic experiences as mathematically

related? Plainly one feeling is not twice as intense as another in the sense that it is identical with two experiences of the other. One severe headache certainly cannot be called equal to two less severe headaches added together in the same sense in which seven is equal to four plus three. If this objection is final it makes an end of all quantitative methods in psychology. If it is impossible to get a genuine psychic unit we need not attempt calculation. And the objection has recently been urged with characteristic clearness and vigour by M. Henri Bergson. With all the respect that is due to so great a name I must urge that M. Bergson has not fully met the reply that the psycho-physicists have been offering to this very objection for the last twenty years.

The unit they adopt is not any particular sensation, but the difference between two sensations. I cannot intelligently say that a sound X is half as loud as a sound Z: but it is not meaningless to say that the sound Y is as much louder than the sound X as the sound Z is louder than the sound Y. One light cannot be called half as bright as another, yet I may fairly speak of one as exactly intermediate in brightness between the other two. Now when the weight of one pound rests on the back of the hand I can quite easily appreciate an additional six ounces laid on the top of it. But if the original weight were a quarter of a stone I could distinguish no difference at all if six ounces were added. Suppose, then, we try as our unit the *just distinguishable difference of sensation*. Beginning with a pressure of one pound let us gradually increase the stimulus until the addition begins to be felt, until in technical phrase the difference-threshold is passed. Note the increase of stimulus. Repeat the process beginning where you

left off, again noting the intensity of stimulus, and so on as far as you choose to carry it.

Proceeding thus, Fechner reached a striking result. The points where intensities of stimulus were noted were separated from each other by equal differences of sensation: they were separated by the unit of measurement which we adopted, viz. the margin of just distinguishable difference. But the differences of stimulus at those points were not found to be equal. No matter what the original stimulus was, the least perceptible addition was found to be a certain fixed fraction of that stimulus: *e.g.* for pressure $\frac{1}{10}$, for light $\frac{1}{100}$, for muscular sensation $\frac{1}{17}$ and so on. The formulation given to the law by Fechner was that the sensations form an arithmetical, while the corresponding stimuli form a geometrical progression.

I give this piece of psycho-physical research merely to illustrate a method: I fully recognize the difficulties that later discussion has revealed in the way of accepting it as final. It is certainly true that it fails both for very low and for very high degrees of stimulation.

The frantic enthusiasm with which it was hailed in Germany as the discovery of the ultimate psycho-physical fact has by this time been sorely damped. But can any one doubt that we are at least on the track of valuable truth, and that the lesson of similar research elsewhere is to be both cautious and patient?

Or take the case of memory. Introspection testifies to it as a fact; physiology shows it to be a fact that is physically conditioned. I am conscious of the power to recall a past experience and to recognize it as past. The recognition involves much more than simple repetition; it involves the judging

thought that my past belongs together with my present to that psychic unity which we call the self. Consequently, the phenomenon of memory is fatal to every type of psychological atomism. Considered from the purely mental side it furnishes a rich field for minute, and yet immensely important psychological distinction. But if we approach it from the physical side we are faced with facts of a different order. We notice that as the nerve tissue decays in old age one remembers with perfect clearness the events of childhood but is strangely confused about the events of last year and perhaps even of last week. We find that in exhaustion and in disease memory plays us strange tricks. And most remarkable of all we find that after an intense brain shock—for example the shock of a railway accident—a man may emerge with an injury which has destroyed his power of recalling one particular group of facts leaving the rest unimpaired. Knowledge of Greek perhaps has been wholly lost while his other knowledge remains as before.

We are at once impelled to find out all that we can in detail about this dependence of memory on neural conditions. Our only way of finding out is the way of experiment.

It would take us much too far afield if I attempted to describe the experiments upon memory that have actually been conducted. But no one can doubt the interest that attaches to the results or can dispute that those results are in the main firmly established. Ribot has classified the various sorts of memory image on the basis of facility of revival into—

1. Those of direct and easy revivability: visual, auditory, tactile-motor.
2. Those of indirect and comparatively easy revivability: pleasures and pains, emotions

(*indirectly* revivable because the emotional state is induced only through the medium of the intellectual state with which it was associated).

3. Those of difficult revivability direct or indirect: tastes, odours, internal sensations.

And the law has been provisionally laid down that an impression is revivable in direct ratio to its complexity and to the motor elements contained in it.

Moreover, we now know that it is, strictly speaking, inaccurate to deal with Memory in general; there is not Memory, there are memories. One person can recall sights vividly but not sounds, another sounds but not sights. Moreover the study of aphasia has shown us that a single memory may be largely lost without the other memories being perceptibly affected. And the mention of aphasia leads us to notice a still further extension of experimentation from which a great deal may fairly be expected in the years to come.

So much light is being cast upon normal psychology by the study of morbid cases that some writers now speak of a distinct pathological method. The distinction, I think, is well worth drawing. There is a region, lamentably vast, where nature herself carries out experiments for us that we could not or dare not carry out for ourselves. The hospital for nervous diseases and the asylum for the insane are, from the point of view of the psychologist, laboratories of unique importance. An instrument is here put into our hands which acts, as M. Ribot has tersely said, at once as an insulator and as a magnifier. Factors relatively obscure in the normal mind and liable on that account to be entirely overlooked by the

introspective psychologist are here presented in an exaggerated form, and apprise us, perhaps for the first time, of their existence. One element, it may be, is missing, and we find that we had never appreciated its value until we experienced its absence. Other elements are modified in varying degrees, and we can study by the method of concomitant variations how these elements affect one another. It is as though we were examining some vast machine with a bewildering network of wheels and piston-rods and cranks, and, just as we had obtained some vague general idea of the working, we were shown samples of the same machine in all stages of derangement small and great, so that we might compare the normal working with the deviation caused by the loss of this or that fragment of the mechanism. We thus discover that many a process once thought simple is exceedingly complex, that features of consciousness once thought independent of one another are but aspects of a concrete unity, and that there are obscure and silent mental activities to which we have never even given a name, which are yet great motive forces in life. How much more do we know about imagery since we have studied hallucination, about personality since we have observed double and triple consciousness, about suggestibility since we have ceased to sneer at hypnotism and have begun to understand it?

We must carefully bear in mind, however, that the experimental method and the pathological method do not by any means stand on the same logical footing. In an experiment we introduce an artificial change whose nature and limits we understand with tolerable precision: for example, we introduce a nerve-stimulus whose effect in the nerve world we know. It is an application of the method of difference.

But no skilled neurologist would claim to know with anything like equal precision the nature and extent of a lesion in the brain. We cannot here apply the method of difference as a method of proof but only as a method of discovery. For no one can possibly be sure that the mental abnormality he is able to point out is the whole abnormality which is present. The great value of pathological study lies in its power of suggesting hypotheses. Deranged man is still man. That which is present in a state of morbid exaggeration or diminution in some persons is also present in some degree in all persons. But in very many cases either its existence or its influence has been hitherto cloaked and consequently ignored.

Take the instance of the "fixed idea." Any asylum will illustrate it. The case quoted by Ribot is that of a patient obsessed with the idea of killing his mother. The notion of such a thing was abhorrent to him. He declared that he had absolutely no motive or reason for doing so; but try as he would to rid himself of it, the idea haunted him, and he voluntarily asked to be placed under restraint.

Two hypotheses of the first psychological importance are here suggested. The first is that the volitional aspect of mental life is capable of disturbance, while other aspects remain, so far as we can judge, normal. And once this has been suggested to us, we find no difficulty in multiplying illustrations. The knowing, the feeling, and the striving aspects of conscious life may be separately dislocated; and we have at once a clue to the explanation of those apathias and aboulias, agoraphobias and claustrophobias, which have so long puzzled the alienist. And the case suggests in the second place the existence of such a thing as Ideo-Motor action, or action

on the bare idea, particularly if the idea has a strong affective tone. For some reason or other the idea of himself as committing matricide has obtained a firm hold over the field of the patient's consciousness. In the absence of all rational motive that idea tends to work itself out in action. May it not be that in every one of us the presence of a bare idea has *some* tendency so to work itself out, even as in this case it has an *overpowering* tendency? And is it not simply the presence of so many inhibiting ideas in the normal mind which prevents such ideo-motor action from being executed? If we carry this hypothesis with us we shall be able to understand not a few odd freaks of everyday experience. Dr. Johnson was certainly not mad in any ordinary sense of the word, yet he could not restrain himself from touching every lamp-post as he passed it in the street, and he would carefully go back to touch one that he had omitted. How many persons whose sanity is unimpeachable have said that in standing at the edge of a precipice they have invariably an impulse—inhibited as soon as it arises—to throw themselves over! The more vivid and terrible the prospect, the greater seems to be the momentary power of the impulse. It is not the mere mechanical danger of overbalancing that makes it inadvisable for most persons to court death or glory at Carrick-a-rede. How many "extraordinary suicides," as the papers call them, take place at such spots among those to whom, if to any one, life ought to be sweet? And what is the meaning of a suicide epidemic? How many persons feel a momentary tendency to drop a lighted lamp that they are carrying? "I never," said a great banker, "hold in my hand a bundle of notes for an enormous amount without the idea of tearing them up flashing across my

mind, and feeling a momentary impulse to do it." And why does the station-master warn us not to stand too near an incoming train? Not merely because a carriage door may be suddenly thrown open, but because we may be "drawn in" by what he describes as "the suction of the train." The theory that the train sucks deserves a place beside Nature's "abhorrence of a vacuum"; we are not physically but psychically lured to our undoing, like the moth to the candle-flame.

Comparison, however, may be profitably instituted, not merely between the normal and the deranged, but between the mind of the child and the mind of the adult, or between human and animal intelligence. We cannot fail to learn something of a mature product by studying with care the process of its unfolding. In particular we may thus save ourselves from attributing to the highest and most recently developed mental activities phenomena that are sufficiently explained as reflex or as instinctive reactions. We think of man too much in the categories of rationality. A wholesome corrective is found when we see precisely the same types of action occurring in the animal, the savage, or the young child, to whom such complicated pieces of reasoning cannot possibly be ascribed. Hence the value of that ever-increasing literature which records careful and scientific observation of the phenomena of infancy, of instinct, and of the primitive races of mankind.

It is of the first importance, if our results are to be worth having, that we should not underestimate the difficulties and dangers of this sort of research. Handling these data has risks other than those that belong to psychology in general. Other sciences must be everywhere laid under tribute. The zoologist must

inform us with a nicety of distinction, which he has so far rarely reached, regarding the behaviour of animals. The anthropologist must give such halting and uncertain guidance as he can through the mazes of prehistoric custom. The philologist must discover for us in language the traces of a social life which has passed for ever from the world, save for the monuments which it has found for itself in words. And when the data have been collected and arranged, history shows in how many ways a blundering psychology may misuse them. The commonest fallacy is that of interpreting every kind of experience under the categories of our own experience. It still vitiates to a greater or less degree most of what is written about the mental life of animals. We observe the behaviour of the dog or the monkey, and we infer that because that behaviour if seen in man would probably be the outcome of a certain sort of intellectual process, the same process must be at work in the case before us. And once we have stereotyped such a view in a metaphor, we are most reluctant to reconsider it, whatever may be the extravagances to which it leads. For example, it is the opinion of some psychologists that the attraction exercised by the so-called "queen-bee" over the other occupants of the hive results from the possession of a special odour. But once it had occurred to some poetically-minded naturalist to use the title "queen" the imagination rapidly ran riot. The bees became a highly patriotic and even an imperialistic community. They have a developed industrial system. They have an elaborate architecture. They have a forethought, a power of adapting means to ends long foreseen, by which the moral of industry can be pointed for generations of schoolboys, and which may put many

a statesman to shame. In their political thinking Socialism has made strides that the most ardent reformer of us all may envy. And what is true of the bees is true also of the ants, with their careful division of labour—their agricultural caste and their warrior caste. Such is the psychological havoc that is wrought by words.

But we are working our way out of these fogs. Scientists have long been acutely alive to anthropomorphism in theology; they are coming now to see that anthropomorphism may work downwards as well as upwards. If we tend to degrade divine attributes after the likeness of human infirmity we tend no less to idealize into human dignity the mental life of the beasts of the field. Take for example the pretty story told by G. J. Romanes in his book on "Animal Intelligence":

> "I have noticed in one of my formicaria a subterranean cemetery where I have seen some ants burying their dead by placing earth upon them. One ant was evidently much affected and tried to exhume the bodies; but the united exertions of the yellow sextons were more than sufficient to neutralize the effort of the disconsolate mourner."

The annotation of this tale by Wundt will be branded as "showing no feeling for the animal world"; but it is absolutely sound psychology:

> "It is a fact that the ants carry out of the nest, deposit near by, and cover up dead bodies just as they do anything that lies in their way. They can then pass to and fro without hindrance. In the observed case they were evidently interrupted

in this occupation by another ant and resisted its interference. The cemetery, the sextons, the feelings of the disconsolate mourner which impelled her to exhume the body of the departed—all this is a fiction of the sympathetic imagination of the observer."

William James was surely right when he spoke of the interpretation of the psychoses of animals, savages and infants as "wild work in which the personal equation of the investigator has things very much its own way . . . no rules can be laid down in advance. Comparative observations to be definite must usually be made to test some pre-existing hypothesis, and the only thing is to use as much sagacity as you possess and to be as candid as you can."

III

There is a third circumstance to which, more perhaps than to any change either in purpose or in method, we owe the revived interest in psychology. It has revealed itself as a science capable of *application*, and that in two senses:

(*a*) It casts light on not a few of the strictly speculative difficulties of other sciences; and

(*b*) It is making important contributions to the perfecting of several practical arts.

(*a*) Consider in the first place the "Science of Society." How much industry and how much perverse ingenuity have been expended in the attempt to give an account of the origin of our social life and institutions! We have long buried the conception of a contract in which primitive mankind swore fidelity

to an arrangement dictated by "intelligent foresight" and "enlightened self-interest." The historians have assured us that such a notion is unhistorical, and that the records, such as they are, indicate on the contrary a slow development of the idea of contract out of the idea of status. But if psychology had not been so one-sided we should have required no historical research to inform us of our error, and that error still persists in a subtler form even after history has cast what light it can. For at bottom the error is a psychological one, consisting in a false though plausible theory of the springs of action. It was natural to take for granted that impulse and will in man are everywhere guided by purposive reason; it followed that wherever we aim at things really detrimental this must be because we somehow imagine them to be advantageous. How natural the assumption was we may see from the attempts made by Greek thinkers to deal with the Socratic paradox. The common experience of seeing the better and choosing the worse was a standing puzzle in the ancient world; the solutions offered were mainly in intellectual terms alleging an error of judgment; and the enigma was not less perplexing to Bentham and Mill, nor was their answer more satisfactory. For, confining their analysis of human nature almost exclusively to the cognitive side, they could not help regarding man as always and everywhere a being that either consciously or unconsciously plans, adapts means to ends, reasons about things before doing them, and does everywhere the thing that on the whole at the time he does it seems to him most profitable. The construction of communal life was represented to have been the most ingenious of the devices adopted by this mythical being for the maximization of his own happiness.

Even his volitions and his emotions were explained away as a sort of ratiocination in disguise. Surely it is a great step in advance to have realized that man is primarily a creature that acts and only secondarily a creature that thinks, and that to interpret his conduct as simply a corollary from or an annexe to his reflection is a perverse paradox. Those who aim at constructing a theory of society have now begun to take serious account of the facts which comparative psychology is setting before them, especially of those non-rational impulses of gregariousness, acquisitiveness, and constructiveness which man shares with the bee, the ant, and the buffalo. It was necessary to forget *d priori* notions and to make a fresh beginning from the data of psychic experience in order to secure for the life of feeling and impulse a separate and independent treatment. The result has been to get rid once and for all of those desperate attempts to resolve the primitive instincts of the race into complex strivings after pleasure or far-seeing calculations in hedonistic arithmetic, and indeed of the supposed obligation to "reduce" our instinctive life to terms of anything but itself. That the tendencies I have named are, as the Utilitarians would have said, "of felicific tendency," or as the Evolutionists would say "of survival-value," gives no reason at all to suppose that they were adopted because either animals or men discovered that to herd together, to build, and to store helped them to be happy or to survive. They are all found at levels of sentient life far too low in the scale to allow such complex processes of thought. Yet how deeply does each of them enter into the activities of social man, and how many of those activities may be explained in such terms without postulating any higher processes whatever!

And when we add to these the "General Innate Tendencies" as Dr. McDougall has called them, of Imitation, Sympathy, and Suggestibility, how much more in the life of even the most developed community can be interpreted without having recourse to the "inherited experiences of the race"!

Long after the doctrine of an actual social contract had been abandoned, it was still urged that the *justification* of society rests in the end on the hedonistic advantage which it confers. Indeed, no other doctrine could well have been held by those who believed that the only motive capable of influencing the will is the quest for pleasure; on that assumption whatever development is gradually revealed in the system of man's motives and in the outward expression which that system receives in social life must arise from increased knowledge of the sources of pleasure or from increased skill in their acquisition.

The result of this line of thought was given to us in the political theory of the utilitarians: amazing acuteness was shown in solving an artificial problem —a problem but slightly caricatured in the well-known words "Given a community of rogues, how can we evolve a morality from their combined action?"

The incoherences of the system which thus emerged have often been pointed out, and I shall draw attention to only one. It was impossible to show that the individual seeking his own "enlightened self-interest"—which *ex hypothesi* meant seeking his own greatest attainable sum of pleasures —will at the same time seek the good of the community as a whole. A rough general coincidence between private interest and social justice can easily be demonstrated, especially when one remembers the sanctions with which society has fortified itself; but Henry

Sidgwick had no difficulty in showing that the coincidence is far from being exact, and that it breaks down precisely at those points where it is most required. Secret treason, for example, provided the traitor is well paid, and secrecy can be permanently preserved, may well make for the prosperity of the individual at his country's expense. And it was the poorest of replies to urge that the betrayer of his country will suffer more pain on the whole by the guilty conscience which will never cease to accuse him. For it is just in proportion to the depth of his anti-social feelings that he will escape such a penalty. It operates least efficiently just where it is most urgently needed. In short, if by interest we mean, in hedonistic phrase, quantity and intensity of pleasures, it is certain that individual and social interests must collide, and to the break-down of the system at this point no one except an apologist devoted to "the system right or wrong" could close his eyes. Where private pleasure and public advantage are inconsistent the selfish alternative ought logically to have the support of Bentham and Mill. In such a case political obligation cannot be based on ethical grounds, and the only right the state possesses is the "right of the stronger."

From this result of a by-gone psychology, many persons have drawn a moral very different from that which I am endeavouring to commend. They have argued that the vindication of the state and of its authority must rest upon other than psychological grounds, and that psychology can cast upon the subject only a misleading light. I shall argue on the contrary that Mill was right in principle though wrong in application. If we are departing to-day from the ethical and sociological position which he

defended, it is not because we are ceasing to think psychology relevant to these sciences, but because we think that the particular psychology of which Mill had convinced himself was mistaken. And those of us who think so urgently desire to see that view of human nature which we believe to be correct applied to these studies with Mill's lucidity and logic. But first let us consider the view of those who distrusted psychology altogether and met the difficulty otherwise. How far did the political theory of T. H. Green and his school effect an improvement upon that Benthamite tradition which it displaced?

It is a high merit of the social theory of Green that it breaks away entirely from the notion of the state as a mechanical arrangement—a sort of instrument devised by human ingenuity as conducive to certain ends that we have for the time in view, and hence liable to be superseded if we should cease to desire those ends, or if we should discover some other instrument more efficient for securing them.

It is a special distinction of Green that he declared war on this doctrine at the time when the empiricist school in England was at the very zenith of its fame. He espoused on the contrary the conception of the State as not a conventional arrangement but a natural and inevitable growth necessitated by the nature of man. Only in social institutions, he insists over and over again, can the spirit of man find expression; only there can he "realize himself." Following the thought, and at times almost the very words, of Butler he argues that man has not made for himself society but rather is man unmistakably made *for* society; personality is divested of meaning, if considered without reference to an environment of other persons: the self necessarily involves other selves.

Hence it becomes superfluous to inquire how we shall harmonize individual and social good; to find here a difficulty is to suppose a false antithesis; a pre-social or a non-social self whose interests may conflict with those of the community is an abstraction of those atomistic psychologists who have so long misled us. Hence the basis of political obligation may be put thus:—In every activity of life the driving motive is—not the desire for pleasure—but the impulse to self-expression. That impulse reveals itself most conspicuously in those social institutions which have everywhere appeared as witnesses to the social nature of the race. Consequently, in serving society man is not serving either an external authority that has been placed above him, or a conventional association with which he has become accidentally and temporarily connected. He is finding for himself fuller and fuller expression, and wherever the process is for the time irksome and painful, it is the lower self which dies that the higher self may live.

I should be the last to question the value and significance of this line of thought. On the contrary, I think it is the most profound and satisfactory interpretation that has yet been given of what Mr. Bosanquet has called "the paradox of self-government." But no one will claim that it makes very clear or very intelligible to us, why and how it is that man has erected for himself the social fabric as it stands to-day. The profane reader is tempted to remark that apparently he has done so because he was just the kind of being that could not help erecting it. There is no attempt to exhibit definitely and concretely what the social impulses of the race are, and how each of them has adjusted its relations with the rest and found for itself satisfaction in the total

result. Now this is precisely the *lacuna* which the present generation of psychologists have done much to fill. They have set themselves to study motive and volition, and they have compared at every step animal with human behaviour. The result has been to give us for the first time a scientific scheme of human instincts. They have reached the conclusion that the place of reason in the determination of conduct was enormously exaggerated by the earlier writers, and that the vast majority of the actions we perform every day are the outcome of non-rational impulses which can be collected, classified, and named. They have given up the attempt to get such springs of action translated somehow or other into intellectual terms, and they are looking very much askance at the effort to exhibit the purposive actions of the dog, the elephant, and the monkey as flowing from a rudimentary logic. The lesson of the comparative work of our time is that man is a sharer through and through in the instincts of the animal world, rather than that any infra-human creature whatever is a sharer in the life of reason.

It would take us too far beyond the scope of this paper to attempt to estimate the practical advantages which may be expected from this more natural and accurate conception of our social life. It seems to me axiomatic that an improved understanding of human impulses and tendencies—of those springs of action that have made society what it is—cannot fail in the end to report itself in more intelligent and effective measures for social amelioration. We shall surely be more successful artificers when we know which way lies the grain of our material; we shall be better reformers when we can make human nature co-operate with us, not struggle against us. I venture

to say that, from the new standpoint, some of the schemes of our practical men will be seen to be quixotic, and some of our Utopias will be found well within our reach.

(*b*) Perhaps the most obvious example of the application of psychology to practice, lies in its bearing upon the art of the teacher. There is a strong feeling that our science must not be allowed to reduce the theory of education to the status of one of its own subdivisions. Professor Münsterberg, of Harvard, wrote very vigorously in this direction some years ago: and with much that he then said I entirely sympathize. But he would not subscribe to-day to all his former opinions on this matter. The situation has changed, and Professor Münsterberg, with a candour as admirable as it is rare has changed with it.

It is plain that in one sense the theory of education can never be a mere branch of psychology. For the teacher has ideals which he is striving to realize; and ideals can never be prescribed for us by a science that deals only in facts and laws. Knowledge of what the impulses and tendencies of human nature are does not inform us how those impulses and tendencies are to be valued. Psychology as such is wholly non-moral. It seeks to understand the mental machinery, leaving it to other sciences to decide for what ends that machinery is to be employed. Whatever be the purpose we have in view, the better we know a machine the more efficiently we shall be able to use it. We shall understand the limits within which we must confine ourselves, and the dangers which we must avoid. But the psychology which used to be offered to the teacher as serving this purpose, while it was by no means

without value, did not deserve the extravagant claims that were made on its behalf. It consisted in the first place of the ordinary general account of cognitive process, of sensation and perception, of the image and the concept, of the laws of association, memory, obliviscence, apperception. And it was reinforced by the still jejune outcome of experimentation on reaction-times, on attention, and on habit. It was, in short, adult-psychology, cut down for children, just as a father in straitened circumstances has his overcoat made to fit successive members of his household. And the fitting was as bad in the one case as in the other. But, in both cases, the makeshift is better than nothing at all.

In recent times, Child-Psychology has been given a place of its own. We have come to see that a child is neither in body, nor in mind, just an adult on a reduced scale. His nature must be studied at first-hand: it must not be inferred from the nature of his seniors, "due allowance being made for the difference in age." For example, that "intellectualist fallacy," which we have noticed as leading to error in general psychology, in the case of childhood simply turns the truth upside down. The life of feeling, so far from being subordinate, so far from being an annexe to the life of intellect, is here primary and paramount. It remains for long the only gateway through which the whole being can be approached and influenced. In what order, then, does the emotional nature unfold itself? What are the instincts that are correlated with the emotions of childhood? To what forms of behaviour do they give rise before the transition has been effected to that plane on which thought begins to assert itself? What is the *rôle* of play? These are questions about which teachers of insight have long been

reflecting, while teachers of no insight have supposed their duty amply discharged when they have crammed the mind with information. "Facts," said Mr. Gradgrind; "what a boy wants above all things is facts." Many a good teacher however, impatient of the technicalities of our science, is willing to subscribe to the statement that 'psychology consists of putting what every one knows in language which no one can understand.'[1] Those who say so must have in mind the treatises of a quarter of a century ago; they can scarcely be familiar with that literature of the subject which is now advancing both in extent and in quality year by year. In the work of the late Professor James, of Professor Münsterberg, of Professor Welton, to name only a few, they will find just the most urgent difficulties of the school-room treated in a fashion that is anything but a repetition of pompous trivialities; they will find a careful application of all that we have recently learned (and it is much) about imagery, and memory, and feeling, and emotion, and many other psychic phenomena of childhood, brought into living contact with educational theory.

The programme of possible applications is literally boundless. There is not a science concerned with social life, and their number is always increasing, where the psychologist is not wanted; or at least, if he is not wanted, he is very much needed, and those who try to go on without him will one day in their difficulties have to appeal to him.

IV

That transformation of method which I have characterized as a "reform," appears to some critics

[1] Quoted by Prof. Welton, "Psychology of Education," chap. i.

in a wholly different light. It is now necessary to consider the grounds on which the objections of these critics rest.

One may always expect to find new methods disliked simply because they are new. There is a deep-seated conservatism even among scientific workers; the history of almost every study will illustrate it, and it yields to no sort of refutation, except that which time and development automatically supply. One day such objections perish from sheer inanition. They derive whatever short life they have from emphasizing the mistakes and failures by which an infant science is inevitably beset, and they express themselves in jests and pleasantries for which the material becomes every year more scanty and more sterile. The experimental psychologist may freely confess that there are many problems which ought to come within the scope of his method, which he believes to be destined one day to come within it, but to which he does not at present see even a promising line of approach. It is true that behind him the pathway is strewn with abortive experiments and abandoned hypotheses. The assured outcome is as yet comparatively slight. But to those who are deterred by difficulties just because they are difficult, by mistakes just because it is unpleasant and discouraging to have made them, and by meagre results because they are impatient for some thing sensational, one must say in plain terms that they have no business to set their hands to scientific work. They have not learned the first and most obvious moral of the history of investigation.

But there is another type of criticism which is very far from being mere prejudice, and which must

be considered with all respect. It comes to us mainly from the school known as the "New Realists" —a school which includes some extremely acute and vigorous thinkers who disbelieve in modern psychology, and who understand with perfect clearness that a great deal must be proved if their contention is to be made good. They undertake to show two things: (*a*) that the empirical psychologists are spoiling epistemology, a subject to which empirical methods have no relevance but to which such methods are being persistently applied; and (*b*) that there is really no subject of importance to which the empirical psychologists' methods *are* relevant, and that, in short, there ought never to have been any such thing as empirical psychology at all. We should never have departed from the standpoint of Plato and Aristotle: so far as we have departed from it our work has been misleading. The three features which I have enumerated as notes of progress, are in truth notes of confusion and of misunderstanding.

This is a frontal attack, and any one who has been persuaded by the considerations urged in the preceding pages must endeavour to meet it or else revise his position. We are a little hampered by the fact that our authentic sources of information are still so meagre. We must rely mainly on the back numbers of "*Mind*," and on a very few books. But the criticism, if it be sound, cuts deep. Let me, then, in the first instance, state as fairly and as sympathetically as I can the arguments on which it rests. Mr. Prichard's article, entitled "A Criticism of the Psychologists' Treatment of Knowledge," is perhaps the best starting-point, and in stating the position I shall draw upon that source.[1] It represents admirably the first,

[1] "*Mind*," N. S. No. 61.

and suggests the second of the contentions to which I have referred.

(*a*) A few years ago it was confidently asserted that in one respect at least the future of philosophy was assured. Whatever differences of detail might be found in coming systems they must all alike be systems of Idealism. This capitulation, however, on the part of those who had not been idealists was entirely premature. They did not recognize that Idealism springs from a certain psychological root, a root whose destruction is both easy and desirable. It consists in the assumption that in the knowing act the object before the mind of the knower is primarily a state of his own consciousness, and only derivatively or inferentially a fact about the world outside. This assumption, bequeathed to us by Berkeley, is simply taken over as it stands by modern psychologists.[1]

But if this is granted it follows that we can never know the outside world at all. For the alleged inferential or derivative knowledge must be invalid. From the facts of a purely mental set of experiences we may, perhaps, argue to some other mental experience, but in no case are we entitled to argue to that which is non-mental. And we may not even argue to the experiences of minds other than our own. In short, the only logical Idealism is Subjective Idealism and its outcome is Solipsism.

(*b*) Thus the "psychologists' treatment of knowledge" must be sceptical. But—so runs the argument—if we look at the matter more closely we shall see that these persons have no right to be treating of knowledge at all. Empirical Psychology distinguishes itself from other sciences by a different sort of distinction from that which separates these sciences

[1] Cf. Mr. Prichard's article, pp. 33 and 37.

from one another. Such studies as physics, chemistry, or botany, have each a special subject-matter: each is concerned with a particular class or type of objects selected from amongst all other objects of experience. But though psychology claims to be a natural science in the sense in which natural sciences are contrasted with philosophy, it has no particular kind of objects of its own. In some way or other it asserts the right to deal with all classes of objects, and it explains this to mean that the differentia of psychology lies, not in the things to which it refers, but rather in the standpoint from which it refers to them. Dr. Ward has told us that the data of psychology include the whole choir of heaven and the whole furniture of earth. But while the separate or special sciences divide this material into parts, the psychologist looks at the whole from one particular aspect: he considers them "as objects presented to a subject." Now the subject-object relation is unique;[1] and the methods of a natural science can cast no light whatever upon it. For that which is necessarily assumed in a method the method cannot pretend also to explain. You may not treat as if it were itself an object that very relation through which our awareness of objects is constituted. This can be considered only on the ultimate, not on any proximate level of thought. It belongs not to the stage at which knowledge is being built up piece-meal, but to the stage of the final synthesis. It is a problem for *philosophy*: and the psychologists cannot say in one breath that they have nothing to do with philosophical puzzles, and also that this is a problem for them. To attempt explanation on the lower level of that which admits of explanation only on the higher leads to inevitable

[1] Mr. Prichard's article, p. 49.

confusion. In this case it leads one to deal with knowledge as if it were a mere set of mental happenings, ignoring its objective reference. The mistake is correlative to that of the materialists. They analyze cognition into its material concomitants. Ancient psychology, on the other hand, avoided both errors, for it made no profession of "explaining" the cognitive process. It was content to classify and arrange.

In truth every one who attempts explanation in this sphere is misled by the analogy of the natural sciences, and we must boldly deny in the face of the prevailing fashion that psychology is a natural science at all.[1] We cannot treat mind as the physicist and the chemist treat matter. Their method is constantly that of analysis: the secret of things is to be discovered by taking them to pieces. But the secret of mental life is not to be similarly sought. Higher mental states are no special complications of lower mental states, a fallacy which was long ago exposed once for all.

In this criticism several considerations are urged regarding the limitations of modern psychology which I have not only admitted but emphasized in the first section of this paper. But while they seem to me to be both true and important they also seem to be a wholly inadequate basis for the view which has been grounded upon them.

Notwithstanding the Realist revival which at present centres in Oxford there are still many persons to whom it would not seem a cogent argument, even if it were proved against modern psychology that idealistic metaphysic follows as an inference from it. But it has been a principal contention of this essay

[1] Mr. Prichard's article, p. 53.

that no particular sort of metaphysic follows as an immediate inference from any particular sort of psychology, though psychology equally with every other natural science may unearth facts which some types of metaphysician will find extremely embarrassing. It would be a strange irony of fate if those workers who are proclaiming most loudly their freedom from ontological entanglements were really the most closely wedded to one ontological system. But Mr. Prichard seems to affirm what is, if possible, a still more striking inconsistency. Not in spite of but actually because of their attempt to detach themselves from metaphysical connexion are modern psychologists actually bound to the chariot-wheels of Berkeleian metaphysics. But why?

It simply comes to this: according to Mr. Prichard a man may not deal with the problem of knowledge at all unless he deals with every aspect of it at the same time. If he attempts to state from a single point of view what takes place in the cognitive act, Mr. Prichard reminds him that there are other aspects of the same act which he is "ignoring." The psychologist replies, "Certainly there are; it is not the way of a natural science to consider everything at once. To convict me of an *illegitimate* abstraction you must show not merely that I am leaving something out but that I am leaving out something *which is germane to the purpose that I have immediately in view*." That purpose is not to construct a theory of knowledge in the sense of a theory which shall show whether and how far valid knowledge is possible. The aim of the psychologist in this reference is to describe the phenomena of knowledge from the subjective side, leaving the relation between this and the objective side to those whose business it is to exhibit

and to examine it. Why may the psychologist not be permitted to do so in peace?

As I tried to show in the first section of this essay Mr. Prichard's criticism is really relevant to a conception of the science which is now largely obsolete. It descended to us from Locke, and was represented in last generation by Mill. It certainly claimed that the validity of knowledge was to be determined by a psychological inquiry into the circumstances of its origin. That Mr. Prichard is thinking of psychology in this interpretation is corroborated by the objection he raises to the view that higher mental states are special combinations of lower. His observations might stand as an attack conducted with great skill upon the Associationist view of perception and upon mental chemistry. These doctrines, however, are repudiated just as strongly and for just the same reasons by writers like Professor Stout or the late William James as by Mr. Prichard. Against the standpoint which these psychologists have substituted for the older one, and against the function which they now assign to their science nothing relevant is urged.

He appears to mean that since psychology has been proved incompetent for the task which writers like Mill imposed upon it, it is, therefore, not competent for any task at all. But does this follow? Is there no advantage in finding out and formulating the laws of the attention-process unless you are able at the same time to throw light on the subject-object relation? Is it useless to examine the varieties of memory with all the help you can get from experimentation and from abnormal cases unless you are conducted by the very same investigation to some new truth about the relation of body and mind? Shall we refuse to learn anything about the laws of

conscious process from cases of dissociation because we are not also learning something about the Copy-Theory or the Coherence-Theory ?

Moreover, are we sure that there is not at least an *indirect* significance for epistemology in these researches ? It seems to me rash to say beforehand that any ascertained fact in the phenomenology of mind will have no bearing whatever on the final synthesis. Such contempt for the day of small things is never a mark of sciences that progress. The pragmatists are telling us that it is time for Theory of Knowledge to give at least a passing glance to the conditions of actual knowing. Even if the accumulation of curious facts that the psychologists are bringing to light should turn out in the end to be useless to the metaphysician, at least the storing of them was kindly intended. And the collectors are not yet without hope. If the lion will let the mouse go for this time who knows but that some day when the king of beasts is entangled in one of those nets which are all too frequent in his experience, his tiny ally may be able to gnaw through some of the meshes ?

One sort of psychology however Mr. Prichard will allow. So long as we preserve the standpoint of Plato and Aristotle we may go on : natural science methods are the danger. Presumably this means comparison and experimentation. Is introspection alone safe ?

I shall scarcely be suspected of underestimating the significance of that change in psychological method which I have devoted so many pages to describing : at the same time I do not believe that Plato and Aristotle are really on Mr. Prichard's side. They did not acknowledge, it is true, a contrast between psychology as a natural science and philosophy

as wielding instruments other than those of a natural science in the same sense in which the contrast has been advocated in this essay. But neither did they contrast the methods of philosophy with the methods of a natural science in the same sharp fashion as Mr. Prichard. Will he suggest that the analytic mind of Aristotle, patiently collecting the phenomena of consciousness even as it collected the phenomena of animal forms, was aware of any difference in method as it passed from the one material to the other such as Mr. Prichard thinks must be prescribed by the uniqueness of the subject-object relation? In the one case he was introspecting, in the other he was examining external things. But is there anything in his psychological procedure to show that he would not have employed comparison and experimentation if he had had any means of doing it? No writer on the subject more conspicuously insists that the phenomena of mental process must first be collected, and that theory must not precede or prescribe but must always wait upon observation. Who can doubt that if he had possessed the artificial aids to introspection that are ready to our hands he would have used them with a will? They are but an extension and an elaboration of his own method. It is as though one were to argue that the study of the stars is admirable provided we employ only such telescopes as were known to Ptolemy, or that navigation is unobjectionable if we confine ourselves to wooden ships.

Finally, one would not gather from Mr. Prichard's criticism that psychologists have any other important task than to discuss cognition. This is perhaps the least conspicuous feature in the psychological work of our time. As I endeavoured to show in last section the investigation of feeling and will is the sphere in

which most notable progress has been and is being made. There at least the πρῶτον ψεῦδος of which complaint is heard can scarcely enter. Emotional and volitional life can be examined without assuming anything for or against Berkeleian Idealism. If the result of the new methods had been to give us nothing more than M. Ribot's book on the Emotions and M. Tarde's book on Imitation they would be sufficiently vindicated.

Thus while I sympathize strongly with much that Mr. Prichard has so acutely and forcibly argued, I cannot regard his article viewed as an attack on modern psychology, as anything else than an *ignoratio elenchi.* He is at pains to demolish a position which was indeed once taken up in the infancy of the science by psychologists of repute, but which is now very generally abandoned. Of the repudiation he is aware, but he proceeds with his criticism all the same. He speaks as if it were still the chief *raison d'être* of psychologists to intrude upon the epistemological meditations of philosophers, ignoring the fact that they have many other fields to till. He roundly condemns all methods but those of Plato and Aristotle, yet offers not a word of comment upon the circumstance that it is by methods not indeed contrary to but enormous extensions of those of Plato and Aristotle that the emotional, the volitional and the instinctive life of man are for the first time being systematically interpreted. And, if it were not outside the range of this paper, I should be tempted for the honour of Irish philosophy to break a lance with a critic who takes the thought of Berkeley as exhausted in the *Dialogues* and the *Principles of Human Knowledge* entirely ignoring the *Siris.*

II

THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE HYPOTHESIS OF SUB-CONSCIOUSNESS

"I compare man's gradual progress in self-knowledge to his gradual decipherment of the nature and meaning of the sunshine which reaches him as light and heat indiscernibly intermingled. So also Life and Consciousness—the sense of a world within him and a world without—come to the child indiscernibly intermingled in a pervading glow. Optical analysis splits up the white ray into the various coloured rays which compose it. Philosophical analysis in like manner splits up the vague consciousness of the child into many faculties :—into the various external senses, the various modes of thought within. This has been the task of descriptive and introspective psychology. Experimental psychology is adding a further refinement. In the sun's spectrum and in stellar spectra, are many dark lines or bands, due to the absorption of certain rays by certain vapours in the atmosphere of sun or stars or earth. And similarly in the range of spectrum of our own sensation and faculty there are many inequalities—permanent and temporary—of brightness and definition. Our mental atmosphere is clouded by vapours and illumined by fires, and is clouded and illumined differently at different times. . . . The artifices of the modern physicist have extended far in each direction the visible spectrum known to Newton. It is for the modern psychologist to discover artifices which may extend in each direction the conscious spectrum as known to Plato or to Kant."

FREDERIC MYERS.

NINE years have now elapsed since the first publication of the great work by Frederic Myers entitled "Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death." That book by no means originated the theory of sub-consciousness, but it applied it in so novel, so systematic, and at the same time so admirably cautious a fashion that the theory, at least for British psychologists, still connects itself closely with

the name of Myers. During these last years evidence on both sides has steadily accumulated: facts have been published, especially from the records of medical practice, which had seemed to the observers mere freaks of nature, unaccountable oddities only to be wondered at and forgotten, but which in the light of the theory assumed a fresh significance. Data have been patiently collected by the organized efforts of the Society for Psychical Research, and these are still being subjected to the most searching criticism by those best competent to deal with them.

It seems to me that the discussion shows some sign of becoming confused. The hypothesis, as originally stated, was neither truistic nor ambiguous nor unintelligible. One cannot say this of its formulation by not a few writers to-day. This is, no doubt, partly due to the intense interest that has been aroused, and to the fact that persons of such diverse types have borne a share in the controversy. The problem may clearly be approached from an indefinite number of sides, and the strictly psychological workers have systematically encouraged every one who thinks he has anything to say. We have had contributions from physicists and pathologists, from lawyers and asylum physicians, from clergymen and poets. We have not disdained even the help of those whose *bona fides* must, in the first instance, be scrupulously examined—the professional thought-readers, the clairvoyants, and the managers of hypnotic and spiritualistic *séances*. This catholicity of evidence has had its inevitable result. Too many persons without any special aptitude for psychological work have not been content to supply facts but have given us at the same time much rash and ill-considered theory. Consequently in the literature of

the subject it has become difficult to be sure in what sense, possible or impossible, a particular writer uses his terms. Often a single author or speaker seems to use the same word in different senses, each of them ill-defined, and is saved from violent inconsistency only by the circumstance that where all one's meanings are sufficiently vague, collision among them becomes impossible. It is to be regretted that the term "sub-consciousness" was not left in that scientific aloofness which has preserved a precise meaning for such words as apperception and epiphenomenon. It rather shares the ambiguity which now embarrasses the discussion of such subjects as "Instinct" or "Imagination." And the looseness of the central term has brought with it for some writers a similar looseness of thought wherever the subject is treated. Consider, for example, this passage from an author of the unquestioned eminence of the late Mr. Frank Podmore:—

"Briefly then to the older philosophy the mind of man seemed a thing apart, a clear-cut indissoluble unity, whose permanence and identity admitted neither doubt nor degree. To the new experimental psychology the unity of consciousness is a mere illusion; it is even as the 'elementary' nature of earth, air, and water, the unreasoned judgment of ignorance."[1]

This professes to state, not an individual opinion, but a precise and an assured scientific result. It will serve as a text for this paper: I cannot better illustrate the ambiguities and confusions by which this controversy is at present beset than by pointing out in how many senses Mr. Podmore's words may be understood.

[1] "The Naturalization of the Supernatural," pp. 276, 277.

The hypothesis of Sub-consciousness has three main forms which we must carefully distinguish:—

1. That in association with a single brain and nervous system we find *in some cases* evidence not merely of one consciousness—that namely which manifests itself in ordinary waking life—but of another consciousness and even of other consciousnesses, and that these are ejective to one another, *i.e.* the experience of each is unknown to the rest.
2. That such "disintegration of consciousness" is a feature not merely of certain morbid or pathological cases, but also of the ordinary or "normal" mind.
3. That it is in strictness of language improper to speak in the above cases of personality as being disintegrated, because there never existed any real unity upon which the disintegration could take place. Different personalities are connected with a single body in the same sort of way in which different personalities are connected with different bodies, and there is no real sense in which they combine or form one spiritual unity.

It is clear that we might understand any one of these senses without doing violence to Mr. Podmore's language. But they are very far from being the same or from mutually implying one another, and I hope to show that they are supported in very different degrees by the evidence that is now available.

For the hypothesis in the first of those forms which I have enumerated the case seems to me over-

whelmingly strong. I shall review very rapidly the main arguments that have persuaded me of this and shall have an opportunity in doing so to point out why the theory appears decidedly less cogent in the second form and wholly inadmissible in the third. Every well-instructed believer in the existence of subliminal mind is by this time ready to abandon not a few of those lines of proof which were once offered as convincing. I need scarcely say that in the compass of a single paper I must omit all mention of a considerable number of these, and must confine myself to those which have still weathered the storm of criticism. If I am obliged to rehearse once more cases and experiments with which the reader is very familiar it is because I wish to isolate the genuine evidence from that general mass of which a great part has now ceased even to be plausible. The main strength of the position lies in the arguments that are drawn (*a*) from automatisms, (*b*) from the facts of post-hypnotic suggestion, and (*c*) from the attested instances of so-called "alternating personalities."

I

(*a*) I begin with the experiments carried out by M. Janet and M. Binet of the Sorbonne on hysterical patients with "anæsthetic arms."[1] The arm evinces no susceptibility to any kind of sense-stimulus, tactile, muscular, or even pain-producing. The anæsthesia, however, is plainly of psychical, not of physical origin. We have the only sort of evidence that we could possibly have in such a case that there is *a*

[1] The reader is referred to M. Binet's '*Alterations of Personality*,' from which this evidence is taken.

consciousness connected with the anæsthetic limb, and again we have the only sort of evidence we could have that this consciousness is not that of the ordinary "talking" person.

The evidence is that if you hide the arm by means of a screen from the sight of the patient the "anæsthesia" disappears. The disappearance is attested not, of course, by the sudden acknowledgment of the talking person at the other side of the screen, but by the sudden change in the behaviour of the arm itself when stimulated. It responds not merely in *reflex* fashion, but apparently in *intelligent* fashion so that in some degree it is possible to hold "conversation" with it. And the conclusion seems inevitable that there is one stream of consciousness connected with the nerve centres of the arm and another stream connected with the nerve centres of the rest of the body.

While the arm remains hidden from the patient's sight one may bend it, double up the fingers, prick it with pins, put pencils or other objects into the hand, and the reply of the "talking consciousness" to the question, "What have I done to your hand?" is invariably "I don't know." But that *some* consciousness does know is strongly suggested by the way in which the limb responds. It is curiously susceptible to suggestion—if you move it gently backwards and forwards the arm will prolong the movement for a considerable time after you have let it go. If you raise it till the fingers point to the ceiling it preserves that position so long, that in the words of one observer, "the experimenter would be tired of waiting before the patient was tired of immobility." Slip a pencil into the fingers—they will close upon it in precisely the way appropriate

for writing. Guide the fingers to write certain letters, or to draw simple figures upon paper. The movement is prolonged after you release the hand. In some cases whole sentences are thus reproduced, and reproduced even after a considerable interval of time. Try spelling a word incorrectly as you guide the hand; when the movement of writing is repeated, it hesitates when it comes to the wrong letter—sometimes reproduces it, but at other times corrects the mistake. In some cases, if letters or figures be traced by the experimenter on the back of the hand they are repeated in writing.

Thus the anæsthetic arm can be made to repeat any sort of movement communicated to it, and while it is doing so the speaking consciousness denies all knowledge of what is happening behind the screen. Whether we shall call the movements of the hand intelligent depends naturally on our definition of intelligence. They seem certainly to satisfy one test —they are *purposive*.

But M. Binet not only convinced himself that a stream of conscious life existed, connected with the anæsthetic member and cut off from the nervous system of the remainder of the body; he actually got into communication with this separated "self." The method he adopted was that of "distraction." He points out that even in the normal person strained attention produces a low degree of mental anæsthesia. If the mind be concentrated on a train of thought it becomes largely oblivious of its physical surroundings, even though these cannot fail to be impressing to some extent the organs of sense. And it is possible while in such a condition to execute without being aware of it movements and co-ordinations of movements that are of an habitual and a largely automatic

character. He who attends to one thing with sufficient intensity is in that degree "distracted" from everything else.

The extreme point to which a normal, healthy person may be thus distracted is soon reached. But in the hysterical subject the distraction may be much more thorough. One has only to engage such a patient in conversation and, in M. Janet's phrase, there is "a contraction of the field of consciousness." By approaching gently from behind and whispering in the ear a second operator can quickly establish communication with what appears to be a consciousness different from that which speaks by the lips.

Here we find, as in the case of the anæsthetic arm, a high degree of suggestibility. One must ask that questions be answered by certain gestures or by writing, since the talking consciousness is already occupied. And since the latter is 'in immediate connexion with the functioning of the eyes' it is necessary for the experimenter to stand where the patient cannot see him. The hand is made to rest on a table out of the patient's sight, and a pencil is slipped between the fingers. A whole catechism will thus be answered promptly, but whatever knowledge the speaking consciousness possesses is found to be withdrawn from the consciousness that communicates by writing and *vice versâ*.

The next group of cases reveal the presence not merely of separate mental processes, but of processes which, though separate, seem to work in some kind of connexion with each other. There is what Binet calls "a sort of collaboration." The anæsthetic arm is hidden as before from the patient's sight. She is then engaged in conversation, and at the same time a pencil is slipped into the hand behind the screen.

She is asked orally to think of some specified object, and it is found that the anæsthetic hand has written the name of the object, or perhaps traced a pictorial outline of it. And here, as before, the speaking consciousness is unaware of what the hand behind the screen has done.

Cases of this kind fall under the general class of *Motor* Automatisms. Whatever be the interpretation of them, their occurrence has been so abundantly verified that it is no longer possible to refuse to admit them as facts. We are bound to recognize that in certain persons, and these by no means few, highly co-ordinated and to all appearance purposive movements, are carried out by hands and limbs, while the person in question is either unaware of or utterly at a loss to explain his own behaviour. It is undeniable that considerable passages of manuscript are produced by the hand, while the writer is a mere spectator of his own performance. The alleged messages from deceased persons, whatever view we may hold of their origin, cannot, except by an unreasoning prejudice which is wholly unscientific, be regarded as other than an automatic activity of the fingers of the medium, unguided by the ordinary consciousness. And even common somnambulism, where the sleep-walker makes his way through the streets with unerring accuracy, but retains no memory whatever of what has occurred when he awakes, must surely involve some kind of intelligent control, and yet not the intelligence which shapes one's normal conduct.

(*b*) The next group of cases which support the hypothesis consists of those known as "post-hypnotic suggestion."

Any one who has seen a patient hypnotized is aware that while the trance lasts every suggestion of

the operator is readily believed, and every command is faithfully obeyed. I am informed that the medical theory as to what takes place is that somehow or other certain cerebral tracts are for the time inhibited. That is, the reason why the entranced person is so completely at the mercy of his entrancer lies in the circumstance that his personality has been somehow truncated. Those antagonizing forces which in waking life prevent us from believing *all* we are told, and from carrying out *all* that we are bidden, have been cast for the moment into abeyance. The field of consciousness has been so narrowed that there is nothing to oppose suggestion, and hence suggestion works its will. There is probably a great deal of truth in this; but it leaves untouched the far more mysterious problem of the behaviour of the patient *after he has regained normal consciousness.* What, for example, can we make of the case described by Professor Münsterberg in his "Psychology and Crime"?

> "It was in a large city which I was visiting for the first time. I went to see the hypnotic experiments of a friend, a physician for nervous diseases. He invited me to witness the treatment of a lady who had been deeply hypnotized by him for a local nervous disturbance. Her mind seemed normal in every respect. She was a woman of wealth and social position. When she was in hypnotic sleep he suggested to her to return in the afternoon, when she would find us both, and as soon as he took out his watch to declare her willingness to make a last will in which I should become the sole heir to all her property. She had never seen me before, and I was introduced to her under a fictitious indifferent

name. When she left the office, after awakening from her hypnotic sleep, she did not take any notice of me at all. At the appointed hour she returned. . . . She said that she had passed the house by chance, and that she thought it would be nice to show her doctor how much better she felt. . . . Suddenly my friend asked how late it was, and, as arranged, took his watch out of his pocket. There was a moment of hesitation. The lady spoke the next few words in a stammering way; but then she rushed on and told us that she had not expected to find such a company, but that her real purpose in coming was to report to me that she had selected me as her heir, and that now she wanted accordingly to make her last will. . . . I told her that there must be a mistake, as she could not have seen me before, and I mentioned a fictitious town in which I claimed to live. At once she replied that she had just spent the last winter in that city, and that she had met me there daily on the street, and that from the first she had planned to leave me all she owned. . . . The others took part in the conversation; scores of arguments were brought up to discourage her from this fantastic plan. For each one she had a long-considered excellent rejoinder. Finally I told her directly that she had been hypnotized that morning, and that this whole idea of the last will had been planted in her head by the witnessed suggestion of her physician. With a charming smile she replied that she knew all that perfectly well, but that she did not contradict and resist this proposition of the doctor simply because it by chance coincided with her

> own cherished plans, which had been perfectly firm in her mind for a year. . . . To put an end to all this she insisted that paper be brought to her, and then she wrote a codicil which left all her property to the fictitious man from the fictitious town. . . . I put the paper in my pocket . . . and after a few minutes she had evidently forgotten the whole episode. She treated me again as a complete stranger, and when I asked whether she happened to know the city before mentioned, I was told that she had once passed through it on the train. When she left the house she had clearly not the slightest remembrance of that document in my pocket, which we others then burned together."[1]

Whatever may have been the truncated condition to which the personality in this case was reduced by the hypnotizer that same condition must have existed at the time when the suggestion was carried into effect. The trance was long past: how then can we conceive the survival of the trance-personality unless we admit two concomitant streams of mental life? What consciousness was it that awaited the signal made by the doctor in taking out his watch, and responded so promptly when the signal was given? This instance is typical of an indefinite number, and seems to be covered by only one hypothesis.

3. The third group of cases which are specially significant consists of the so-called alternating personalities.

Amongst these cases the famous 'Sally Beauchamp' may be taken as typical. Dr. Morton Prince who has described it was in the first instance concerned with the patient as her medical adviser, and has

[1] Hugo Münsterberg, "Psychology and Crime," pp. 175 ff.

recorded the extraordinary facts which he observed in order that psychologists may make what they can out of them. I by no means endorse the psychological terms which he uses: particularly his employment of the word 'personality' seems to imply the loose popular conception which takes no account of precise or technical distinctions. But with this proviso I quote his summary as admirably clear and terse:

> "Miss Christine L. Beauchamp, the subject of this study, is a person in whom several personalities have become developed: that is to say she may change her personality from time to time often from hour to hour, and with each change her character becomes transformed and her memories altered. In addition to the real, original, or normal self, the self that was born, and which she was intended by nature to be, she may be any one of three different persons. I say three different, because although making use of the same body, each, nevertheless has a distinctly different character; a difference manifested by different trains of thought, by different views, beliefs, ideals, and temperament, and by different acquisitions, tastes, habits, experiences and memories. Each varies in these respects from the other two and from the original Miss Beauchamp. Two of these personalities have no knowledge of each other or of the third, excepting such information as may be obtained by inference or second hand: so that in the memory of each of these two there are blanks which correspond to the times when the others are in the flesh. Of a sudden one or the other wakes up to find herself she knows not where, and ignorant of what she has said or done a moment before. . . .

> The personalities come and go in kaleidoscopic succession many changes often being made in the course of twenty-four hours." [1]

Clearly in the limits of a single essay I cannot go into these cases in detail. I have chosen them as samples of a great mass, and as the particular sort of samples which seem to support most strongly the argument of which I am treating. Many more were readily found as soon as they were made the object of deliberate quest and the collection is by this time exceedingly large. They appear to me to admit of only one conclusion. And those who dismiss evidence of this kind as of little scientific value just because the patients are epileptic or hysterical have failed to understand that it is a truth relative to such abnormal conditions that we are endeavouring to establish. We claim that in these and other nervous disorders one finds two or more streams of consciousness either side by side or successive, two streams which however they may enter into a deeper underlying personality are *subjectively* unknown to each other. Each can counterfeit in separation from the other a complete and unified self.

II

Are these phenomena which appear so conspicuously in pathological cases themselves pathological? Or have we here in a more obvious and striking form occurrences which in a disguised or concealed form are taking place every day in the normal healthy mind?

We saw in last essay that the inspection of morbid cases is of advantage to the psychologist mainly in suggesting hypotheses. One is compelled to notice, when they appear in an exaggerated degree, mental

[1] "The Dissociation of a Personality," *ab init.*

factors and forces which escape attention in the ordinary subject. Consequently we must endeavour to confirm the suggestions that pathological study brings home to us by using them as principles of explanation elsewhere. Can we by assuming sub-consciousness as an agent not only in abnormal but also in normal experience interpret any facts that are otherwise obscure ?

I think there is no longer any doubt that the explanatory value of this hypothesis has been greatly over-estimated. Many activities which were once ascribed to 'subconscious mentation' are now clearly seen to be due to nothing of the kind. One regards with astonishment the extravagant claims of Von Hartmann in his "Philosophy of the Unconscious" where scarcely any limit seems to be set to the sphere of subliminal influences. For example in acquired dexterities like riding or playing a musical instrument, the manipulations of the expert performer are understood as directed by a consciousness at work "below the threshold." In those transitions of thought where an object A suggests another object C without any conscious passage through B, though B is the natural or logical link, the connexion was supposed to have been made subliminally. If we cannot recall a name at night but it occurs to us when we awake next morning, this must be because in the dream state our subconscious faculties have been vigorously active. And perhaps the climax was reached when it was gravely suggested that those highly purposive movements which the stomach carries out in digestion must be presided over by intelligence, if not by conscious, then by lapsed, or unconscious intelligence.

Most of us now feel satisfied that the explanation

of these occurrences is purely physiological. The nervous system is very teachable, and habituation will impart even to complicated movements a precision that is rivalled only by the precision of the reflexes. If one tends in falling to throw out his arms without reflecting either consciously or subconsciously on the matter, there is no need for any deeper explanation of those adjustments of fingers, feet, and body which enable the cyclist to maintain his balance. Of the connexions of thought which enable one to skip intervening links, nothing more need be said than the terse phrase of William James, "short-cuts in the brain." And it seems more probable that we do good mental work in the morning because we have been refreshed by sleep than because we have been working subconsciously all through the night.

But if many supposed items of proof for our hypothesis in its second form must be dismissed there are others which are not so easily got rid of. Clearly much depends on our notion of what constitutes normality and abnormality. Shall we call hypnosis an abnormal condition? We must remember that it is a state that can be induced with ease in ninety-eight per cent. of all classes of persons whether healthy or the reverse. Hence while the trance is of course in a sense "abnormal" it cannot be held to indicate either mental or nervous disease. Still less can we think of the patient who has emerged from the trance and regained his ordinary psychic life as in a pathological state. Yet, as we have seen, the suggestions that were made to him by his hypnotizer are carried out with fidelity at the appointed time, even during the following week. Unless we make up our minds that wherever a

duplication of consciousness is seen this and this alone is to be taken as sufficient evidence of derangement we must admit that sane and healthy persons display at times this peculiarity. But to make up our minds in this way beforehand would readily foreclose not only this question but any other that we find perplexing.

Again, what shall we say of automatic writing? It is found in a considerable number of persons who show no other evidence of mental disturbance. We see it indeed in cases of hysteria and in these it is rightly held to support our hypothesis in the first of those forms which I have enunciated. If one's hand uses a pen to write words which the owner of the hand cannot interpret when they are read, but which have nevertheless a genuine rational meaning, there seems to be no escape from the view that the fingers are controlled by a consciousness "split-off" from that of the rest of the nerve-apparatus. And if this occurs in persons who are not hysterical and who show no symptom of other abnormalities, it seems a little dogmatic to rest a charge against their sanity on this performance alone. Is every crystal-gazer who is not fraudulent to be called deranged? There is already a large accumulation of cases in which this kind of auto-hypnosis has been shown capable of awakening memories which had lain long dormant, of reviving some experience through which the person concerned had actually passed, but of which all trace had disappeared from the ordinary waking consciousness. Where and how did the memory persist? Moreover if one considers that large collection of evidence which is being investigated by the Society for Psychical Research, and which appears to indicate communication between the living and the dead, one will find that, apart from the

assumption of subconscious action, the difficulty of understanding the facts becomes immensely increased. This is not the place, nor do I feel sufficiently acquainted with the material to discuss this fascinating problem. But it is plain that if we do not admit subliminal mentation we shall be forced to admit something far more sensational. Every one grants that at least some proportion of the alleged messages from deceased persons are not really to be so explained: they are to be thought of as telepathic communications between the automatists. But as messages are proved to pass in which information is given that was not known to the automatist from whom it comes we must suppose subconscious mental machinery to be employed unless we are willing to accept some such view as that of the temporary 'possession' of a nervous system by the mind of an absent person. Again we may, if we choose, obstinately believe that wherever this exists we have to do with a pathological subject, and it will be extremely difficult for any one to disprove such a view. But have we any solid reason for affirming it except our reluctance to suppose an extension in the powers of normal mind beyond what our psychological systems have hitherto recognized?

One writer of undoubted competence in this field has recently suggested a rival hypothesis to meet such cases as those which I have enumerated. Professor Störring of Zurich will not admit that there are any facts which really demand the assumption of a duplicate train of consciousness: he holds that they can all be covered by supposing 'variations in the *concausæ* of reproduction.' Not even in the first or most cautious form does the hypothesis commend itself to him: explanation by reference to physical

concausæ, he thinks adequate to the pathological cases as well as to all others. We must briefly consider his reasons. Professor Störring finds the crux of the problem in the existence of hysterical and epileptic amnesia: he deals at length with cases of alternating personality but has less to say of the cases where two streams of consciousness seem to be flowing simultaneously. The argument that I have based upon the evidence of M. Binet's patients is in the main untouched by his criticisms.

In regard to the amnesia that seems to make a complete breach between the personality at one time and the personality at a later time he has two chief points to urge: (1) the amnesia though it may be very extensive is never complete, and (2) it is invariably correlated with modification of organic sensation and by this it is sufficiently accounted for.

The incompleteness is shown by the speed with which the facts known in the earlier state are acquired in the later one: Weir-Mitchell's patient who at the age of eighteen fell into a trance, was apparently afterwards a changed person: "when she awoke she had lost absolutely all remembrance; she was as a being for the first time ushered into the world" but "we see these remembrances manifesting themselves every moment; the patient learns extremely fast; she knows an old song better than a new one."[1] According to Professor Störring this "must mean some connexion between the consciousness of the secondary state and that of the primary."

Doubtless it does mean this; we may however grant so much without relinquishing our view that it also means the existence of a second stream of

[1] Janet, "Mental State of Hystericals," pp. 86, 98, quoted by G. Störring (Prof. Loveday's Translation).

conscious life that has 'some connexion' with the other but that is subjectively broken off from it. I am not proved to know a thing already merely by the circumstance that I learn it extremely fast: and there is no getting behind the testimony of consciousness that in these hysterical cases the knowledge possessed by one 'fragment' of the personality is hidden from the other. The physical way of putting it must surely be that different parts of the nervous system may function in *relative* independence.

Similarly in his second point there seems to be an important truth but not one that really supports the conclusion that he draws from it. He rightly emphasizes that when we recall a past experience we must be in a state of organic sensibility not wholly different from that of the state which is recalled: if the alteration is sufficiently profound it becomes impossible to identify ourselves with the experiencing subject in the past and hence impossible to remember. But this organic alteration we know to be in hysteric and epileptic cases very far reaching indeed: consequently without assuming any difference in the psychic personality we can readily understand that altered brain and nerve concomitants produce an apparently unbridgeable chasm.

Here Professor Störring has admitted all that I am contending for. Our hypothesis in the first and also in the second of those forms which I have distinguished makes no claim to be a metaphysical formula: it raises no ultimate puzzle about the unitary nature of the soul. Moving on the plane of psychology as a natural science it merely declares that such duplication and alternation of consciousness is an empirical fact attested by the same sort of evidence as any other empirical facts. Against the hypothesis in that third

form which we have yet to examine, Professor Störring's criticism is as I hope to show extremely relevant and convincing, just because there the limits of psychology are transgressed; but here I must urge that it rests on an *ignoratio elenchi.*

To sum up then—the wholesale denial of double or triple consciousness, except within the sphere of abnormal or pathological cases, implies a somewhat arbitrary conception of what is normal and what is healthy. We seem forced to admit the existence of these conditions in some activities of the ordinary mind unless we frame a definition expressly designed to exclude them. To do so is highly objectionable from the point of view of scientific method, and is calculated to bar progress in such investigations. On the other hand, just because we feel that the sane is separated from the insane and the normal from the abnormal by a boundary which though real cannot with confidence be definitely placed, we ought to hold our hypothesis in its second form with a reserve which is no longer called for in reference to its first.

III

But what of the third form? "To the new experimental psychology," writes Mr. Podmore, "the unity of consciousness is a mere illusion: it is even as the 'elementary' nature of earth, air and water, the unreasoned judgment of ignorance."

William James has said that the most complete breach in nature is that which separates one mind from another. Material objects may be melted down and fused together in such a way that the original elements of the compound can scarcely be restored. But there can be no interpenetration between mind

and mind comparable to this coalescing of molecules. Does such mutual exclusiveness exist between the fragments of a "dissociated personality"? Are they ejective to one another with that thoroughness with which two complete personalities are ejective? Or are they complementary in such a fashion that the broken unity of which they are constituents may be repaired?

(*a*) We must guard carefully against the deceptiveness of spatial metaphor: we can do so however only by remembering the metaphorical character of the terms we use, for it is impossible to avoid words that have either spatial meanings or spatial suggestiveness. Language was not originally constructed to serve the purposes of psychological analysis, and we must take it as we find it if we are to express ourselves intelligibly at all.

When however we use such words as 'within' and 'without,' 'above' and 'below,' to indicate the relation of the sub-conscious to the ordinary type of experience we must do so under mental reserve. These prepositions are literally appropriate in speaking of the brain or nerve-tissue which is correlated with our psychic life; just as one may describe a rock-boulder as included within a rocky mass and as lower or higher than other parts of the same mass: but a stream of consciousness can be internal or external to a mind only in the sense that the mind is or is not actually aware of it. We need not quarrel with the exponents of an unfamiliar hypothesis for using the most varied and picturesque figures to make clear their meaning: but we must stipulate that a phrase admitted on the basis of metaphor shall not be used later on as if it were a scientific definition.

(*b*) Consequently I do not in the least contend for

the propriety of the language which has at times been used to signalize the reality of the connexion between the apparently dissociated 'selves.' I think we ought not to speak of them as fragments in a whole. But that there is a unity deeper than the differences is to my mind abundantly indicated.

If one approaches the matter from the physical side it is plain that in one sense there is, and must always be, a unified basis. There is at least molecular continuity of nerve substance: the three so-called personalities of Sally Beauchamp are all alike connected with a single body: they may be specially related to different parts of the brain tissue: but these parts are not disjoined, and it is surely a monstrous assumption that no significance at all attaches to the fact of their connexion in a unified human organism.[1] The psycho-neural parallelist cannot admit that this neural fact has *no* psychic fact corresponding to it. On physiological grounds there is a strong *à priori* probability that the streams of consciousness are not wholly separate however difficult it may be to detect and exhibit their connexions in detail.

(*c*) The breaches between the various 'selves' are evidenced chiefly by the fact that in the simultaneous dissociations, knowledge possessed by one of the consciousnesses is *eo ipso* withheld from another and that in the successive dissociations there seems to be complete amnesia when the patient has passed through a trance.

The first of these, so far from indicating a genuinely different self points rather to comple-

[1] For example, it is surely noteworthy that in cases of hysteria quoted above the different 'selves' are served by a single auditory mechanism. In the method of distraction the subliminal region is reached by whispering in the ear.

mentariness between the two: Refer for a moment to M. Janet's patient:

> "One day I had the following conversation with Lucie while her normal self was chatting with some one else: "Do you hear me?" I said. She answered (in writing) "No." "But you must hear in order to reply." "Yes, of course." "Then how is it?" "I do not know." "There must certainly be some one who does hear me." "Yes." "Who is it?" "Some one else, *not Lucie.*" "Ah indeed, another person. Do you want to give this person a name?" "No." "Yes, it will be more convenient." "Very well, Adrienne."[1]

And in other cases the patient has insisted on being called any name whatever other than the genuine one, vehemently excluding her own name beforehand.

Surely this indicates anything rather than a complete separation of the two conscious streams; their very antagonism testifies to a personality of which they are partial manifestations, to a unity in which each needs the other and the other alone. Nor does any different result emerge from a study of the amnesias.

Professor Störring has shown that the more closely we examine these cases the plainer tokens we find that the amnesia is not complete: even where subjectively no evidence is given of recollection in one state for the events that had happened in the experience of the other we find a facility in acquiring the lost knowledge which points to the persistence of residual traces. And there are cases (notably that

[1] Binet, "Alterations of Personality," p. 147 (Baldwin's Translation). The italics are mine.

of "Félida") which present the other tokens of double consciousness but where the usual amnesia is *not* present.

> - "Félida suffers from hysterical alterations and alternations of consciousness, such that in her normal condition she is aware of past experiences belonging to that condition but knows nothing of her abnormal state; whilst in the abnormal state she can recall events that have happened in similar states as well as events belonging to her normal condition. . . . In this case the lower consciousness encompasses the higher."[1]

And it is well known that in hypnosis there is memory, while the patient is entranced, for the events of the preceding ordinary life but not *vice versâ*.

Again in those instances of "mental fog," where it is admitted that the amnesia is to be referred to changed organic conditions there is just as plausible *primâ facie* evidence of a new self as there is anywhere else: yet no one I imagine will contend that a genuine new self is created to accompany the altered organic state.

Lastly, we have many cases to show that it is possible to effect a restoration of the dissociated personality to a unified self in which the partial selves somehow simultaneously appear. This is conspicuous in that patient treated by Dr. Morton Prince of whom I have already spoken. There is no more important chapter in Dr. Prince's book than that entitled, "The Real Miss Beauchamp at last, and how she was found." He writes:

[1] G. Störring, "Mental Pathology in its Relation to Normal Psychology," Eng. Trans. by Prof. T. Loveday, p. 135.

> "On several occasions however a personality was obtained who exhibited all the evidences of a perfect fusion of the two personalities. She remembered her life as I. and IV. She had lost the bad temper and wilful self-determination of IV. and the emotional idealism of I. She was just a normal healthy-minded person and when she was in existence Sally sank out of sight 'squeezed' and imprisoned, helpless within the Bastille of the healthy mind, and unable to get out."[1]

On this aspect of the doctrine of subconsciousness much more might be said but it does not come within the compass of this essay to consider it on any other plane than that of empirical psychology. Those who endeavour to extract from it not merely a working hypothesis which may colligate empirical facts but a principle of metaphysical explanation find themselves confronted with puzzles for the solution of which a psychologist's outfit is not in itself adequate. The ultimate meaning of personality is a problem for philosophy in the widest sense: it will not disclose itself of its own accord however large and varied be our accumulation of empirical facts in the phenomenology of mind. What I am here concerned to emphasize is that there is nothing in the evidence which such research has drawn forth to shake the view that the self is in the end a genuine unity, and that there is even a great deal in such facts, when they are sifted, which lends fresh support to the ancient doctrine.

[1] Dissociation of a Personality," pp. 514, 515.

III

THE INTERPRETATION OF GENIUS[1]

"Nevertheless so much has become evident to everyone that this wondrous Mankind is advancing somewhither; that at least all human things are, have been, and forever will be in Movement and Change; as indeed for beings that exist in Time by virtue of Time and are made of Time might have been long since understood. In some provinces it is true, as in Experimental Science, this discovery is an old one: but in many others it belongs wholly to these latter days. How often in former ages by eternal Creeds eternal forms of Government and the like has it been attempted fiercely enough and with destructive violence to chain the future under the past; and say to the Providence whose ways with man are mysterious and through the great deep: Hitherto shalt thou come but no farther."

CARLYLE.

THERE is something paradoxical in proposing to theorize about genius. One is accustomed to think of it as a thing apart and of things apart science has nothing whatever to say. To explain is to bring under rules, under uniformities, under causes: but a genius would not deserve his name if he could be reduced to rule, accounted for, exhibited as a mere particular instance of known uniformities and known causes. On this ground one usually contrasts genius with talent. The latter is something that we can understand: however modestly we may think of ourselves, we are all more or less talented, and those of us who are less can interpret those of us who are more by the analogy of our own mental activities. The

[1] Based upon Address to Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society.

difference is one of degree. The Senior Wrangler—in the old days when there *were* Senior Wranglers—was, sure enough, far removed from the Wooden Spoon; but the distinction was to some extent referable to differences of application and perhaps to differences of tuition; the Senior Wrangler could quite easily think of many things that he did and that the Wooden Spoon left undone which contributed more or less to his success. And the very difference of original endowment could no more be called a difference of kind between the two men than could that physical contrast which we see between the winner of the Derby and the horse in a hack cab.

But as we pass from that type of intellectual eminence which attests itself once a year in the Tripos to that other type which makes a man a great original discoverer in mathematics we feel that the transition is of a very different kind. The gulf can by no method whatever be either bridged or reduced. It is a gift as inexplicable as the gift of poetry and it is as idle to open a school for the production of the one as for the production of the other. No one has any rules to give, any methods to teach, any discipline to inculcate. As Plato has shown us in the "*Ion*" the poet so far from being able to instruct others in his art is wholly at a loss to say how he composes his poetry himself. And the moral seems to be that we must accept genius thankfully when it appears, but that we need not dream of reducing it to a scientific formula or of classifying it in our feeble categories.

The title of this paper is liable to a second objection. What right have we to assume that Genius is a generic thing? Is not this the old error of that obsolete psychology which spoke about *the* "Imagination" *the* "Memory" and all sorts of other "faculties"

forgetting to ask whether there are not many imaginations, many memories, and whether we have any sound reason to think that they are sufficiently alike to be treated together? Are we sure that there is anything really in common except the name in the mathematical and the poetic genius, in the great musician and the great physiologist? Are they united by any bond more intrinsic than this that their achievements all alike tower above our own? Is there any reason to class together Shakespeare and Charles Darwin except the negative reason that in the presence of either the rest of us feel painfully small?

In reference to the first objection I remark that he who has caught the scientific spirit will never accept anything as "an ultimate and unanalyzable fact" until he has made perfectly sure that he cannot penetrate behind it and that he cannot further decompose it. We have broken up many things that were once reputed to be elements, and we have come to dislike and to suspect the word that has so often been used to burke or to foreclose discussion. Such an attitude of mind is particularly appropriate in psychologists, whose inquiries have been so rapidly advancing, and whose new knowledge is so persistently impeded by the dogmas of a scientific past. What do we mean by calling genius inexplicable except this, that the usual commonplace mental categories will not serve? But how much have we learned in these last years about unusual factors and forces of the mind? How many elements of our psychic life have we found to be of high significance, although their very existence was previously unknown? And who can doubt the propriety of approaching once more with every such increase in our psychological

equipment those problems which we rashly decided to give up but which we ought only to have decided to postpone?

I think the common reluctance even to consider any theory that purports to explain genius has a further though an unconscious source. The progress of science has led us to look upon the explanation of a thing as the first step towards artificially producing it: but the idea of manufacturing genius strikes one as supremely absurd. It is, however, with no notion of either reproducing the genuine article or fabricating a plausible counterfeit that this psychic fact hitherto thought unique has been brought into the psychological laboratory to be examined. It is simply with the view to detecting if we can some of its antecedent or concomitant conditions. That it has such conditions is as certain as the law of gravitation. If we have not yet had the good fortune to discover them let us look upon this as a standing psychological challenge to be taken up again and again as we feel better able to face it.

In reply to the second objection we may say that at least we have distinguished precedent for speaking of genius generically. In his notable lecture on "The Hero as Divinity" Carlyle writes as follows:—

> "We have undertaken to discourse here for a little on Great Men, their manner of appearance in our world's business, how they have shaped themselves in the world's history, what ideas men formed of them, what work they did:—on heroes, namely, and on their reception and performance, what I call hero-worship and the heroic in human affairs."[1]

And he goes on to speak of classes of heroes—

[1] "Heroes," Lecture I., *ab init.*

including such diverse representatives as Mahomet, Burns, Cromwell, Rousseau, and Luther.

Or take this passage from Emerson :—

> "I count him a great man who inhabits a higher sphere of thought into which other men rise with labour and difficulty; he has but to open his eyes to see things in a true light and in large relations, whilst they must make painful corrections, and keep a vigilant eye on many sources of error." [1]

Here we have even got an attempt to define genius in general: these words might be applied indifferently to sculptor, to poet, to mathematician, to statesman. The examples whom Emerson himself goes on to discuss are: — Plato, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Napoleon, Goethe, Swedenborg.

At all events there seems to be no reason why we may not assume as a working hypothesis—until we see grounds for revising it—that there is a common element in greatness of every kind. Men of genius have but a human brain, a human nervous system, and a human mind. We have all the same sort of machinery, but some of us seem to be able to use it with an efficiency which is to the others utterly astonishing. Whether in art, or in literature, or in scientific work, or in the conduct of affairs a few persons organized apparently in the same way as the rest stand out from among them in a way that makes all rivalry hopeless. This thought expresses itself in the petulant complaint of Cassius in "Julius Caesar":

> "I had as lief not be as live to be
> In awe of such a thing as I myself.
> I was born free as Caesar; so were you:
> We both have fed as well; and we can both
> Endure the winter's cold as well as he."

[1] "Representative Men," Lecture I., pp. 2, 3.

What any theory then must explain is this: How comes it that from time to time a man endowed apparently with the same sort of faculties as his fellows is efficient beyond understanding in their manipulation and their co-ordination?

To begin with: does Genius fall into any genuine, scientifically determined, types? Can we classify its varieties? For the clue to the generic concept is most likely to appear when we have before us the various kinds and can thus distinguish the essence from the accidents. Recent psychologists have been impressing upon us that the three modes of mental activity are relatively independent. Each of them is present to some degree in every mental experience but it does not follow that they vary concomitantly. It may happen that one of them is increased or diminished in intensity without corresponding increase or diminution of the other two. This fact is evidenced in the most striking way by the study of the forms of insanity: one finds that each aspect of the mind may be separately disturbed: there are aberrations of intellect or of feeling or of will where the remaining functions are apparently normal.

Now in the light of this principle of independence among the modes of consciousness Genius seems to fall roughly and approximately into kinds. Any one mode may be present to an extraordinary degree of intensity, of delicacy, or of grasp. We may think of the geniuses of intellect—of Aristotle, Copernicus, Leibniz, Newton, Kant, Laplace. There we have the reasoning activity in enormous exaltation. But there are also geniuses of feeling—the poets, the sculptors, the painters, the musicians; we remember the great artists of the world—in every sense of the word art—Pheidias and Sophocles and Shakespeare and Rubens

and Mozart. We see at a glance that their faculty, whatever it may have been, was at least not the faculty of calculating reason: they seem contrasted with much more than they seem akin to the mathematicians, the engineers, and the astronomers. But there is another type—a type that stirs the world as often as it appears, and stirs it in a way in which it is never stirred either by coerciveness of intellect or by fineness of feeling. We use phrases in speaking of it—phrases that serve only to cloak and disguise our ignorance of its nature—phrases such as "the overmastering power of a strong personality." While we cannot explain it we know it when we see it, and, itself unexplained, it becomes the explanation of much that is mysterious in history. We see it in Mohammed, in Julius Caesar, in Cromwell, in Mazzini. We see it in every leader of men whose strength lies in nothing that he says and apparently in nothing that he does, but somehow in the contagion of his presence, in what Napoleon called the "lightning of his eye." We have to do with the geniuses of *will*—often weak in reasoning, still oftener coarser in fibre, but incomparable in driving power.

It is thus not in the least matter for surprise, though it is sometimes wondered at, that Genius should be one-sided. There is a sort of impression that the great man ought to be great all round: if he is a soldier he must shine not only in the field but in the controversies of home politics. And astonishment is expressed because a poet or a philosopher does not display on a casual meeting any extraordinary gifts or graces. Emmanuel Kant rigidly excluded from the conversation at his table all reference to abstract speculations: and we are told that his guests were by no means impressed by his efforts

to discuss general topics. He had a curious habit of reverting to the details of fashion in dress—and that too his own dress. In particular he wished to be advised about his shoe-buckles and whether the long stockings which he wore should be black or white. Could any one tell him which colour lent the more graceful appearance to the ankle? I wonder how many persons came away from the old house in Königsberg feeling that the man who talked like this could not possibly be the genius he was reputed. For we constantly imagine that greatness if it be greatness is a kind of full-orbed splendour, that the genius is the just man made perfect.

Our material then falls into genuine types or classes corresponding roughly to the three-fold psychological division. But, amid the differences, one can describe—though it would still be premature to define—the element that is common. "Genius" it has been said "does what it must while talent does what it can." The poet, the artist, the statesman, have all alike been called "inspired": their gift comes to them they know not how or whence or why; neither can they exercise it to order; they cannot summon at will those creative ideas by which they transform literature and art and public policy. They feel like him of old who had to wait for the troubling of the waters, and when the waters are troubled they cannot choose but enter in.

If this be the distinguishing note of Genius it does seem as if we were setting out to explain that which is *ex hypothesi* inexplicable. But one must remember that when a theory is said to "explain" a group of phenomena, it is not meant that to him who believes the theory the phenomena cease to be mysterious. Quite possibly they may even seem more mysterious

than ever. Mill points out that to the unscientific mind the falling of an apple is quite intelligible, while the law of gravitation is profoundly unintelligible. Yet the unfamiliar law is related to the familiar occurrence as explanation to the thing explained. The most highly cultured physicist would be the last to claim that he understands gravitation in the sense of being able to show why mass attracts mass at all. It is enough for him if he can present all the particular attractions from the fall of a leaf to the orbit of the planets as illustrations of a single principle though that principle should defy all further analysis. The essential thing when we "explain" is that an occurrence should be brought out of its isolation, that it should be exhibited as a special case of a class of occurrences, or that a class should be brought under a wider or more general class. In the end we arrive at a puzzle which is ultimate and irreducible, at something which we must simply accept as given. But one step has been taken in theory when we can change though in a minute degree, the chaotic mysteries into systematic mysteries.

I

The most obvious suggestion to make about genius is that it is a kind of *lusus naturæ;* an odd freak of the evolution process. It is an abnormality, comparable with, and perhaps to be correlated with, physical abnormalities. Those who are curious about it must turn their attention to the study of heredity on the one side and of "accidental variation" on the other. For that which is not a development due to training must be a congenital endowment, and a

congenital endowment must be interpreted, if possible, in terms of ancestral influence. Each child, it is pointed out, is in a sense absolutely unique,—a fresh combination of the qualities of progenitors. And there are oddities that are literally due to accident. Abnormal products are consequently in certain cases to be expected rather than to be wondered at.

It is now tolerably certain that pre-eminent faculty, once it has appeared, tends to reappear in the line of direct descent. Sir Francis Galton has put the statistical argument on this matter in the most convincing way. He has pointed out the fallacy in the objection that rests upon contradictory instances. That objection assumes that if we can show the sons of men of genius to have been in the majority of cases undistinguished, we have thereby disproved the claim that genius is hereditary. Suppose however that one-third or one-quarter of the sons of eminent persons have been themselves eminent, and suppose we estimate the proportion of persons for whom we reserve the title "eminent" at one in five thousand of the whole population, it follows that if a man is born of eminent parentage his chance of rising to distinction himself is at least twelve hundred times greater than if he had been born outside that privileged circle. The inference would be that the influence of parentage is of very high significance indeed in determining mental power.

Applying this method Galton and Ribot have shown that the re-appearance of a distinct faculty in one member after another of the same house is far too frequent to be attributed to coincidence or chance. But they have not sufficiently distinguished cases of genius from cases of merely exceptional or striking talent. They have not shown that the sons of men

of genius are in any remarkable proportion of instances themselves men of genius, though they have shown such persons to possess a decided tendency towards excellence in that department in which their fathers were pre-eminent. For example great emphasis has been laid upon the persistence of the musical gift in the family of Bach.

> "During two centuries," says one writer, "this family produced a crowd of musicians of high rank. The founder of the family was Veit Bach, a Presburg baker who amused himself with singing and playing. He had two sons who were followed by an uninterrupted succession of musicians who inundated Thuringia, Saxony and Franconia during two centuries. They were all organists or church singers. When they became too numerous to live together and had to disperse they agreed to reunite on a fixed day once a year. This custom was preserved up to the middle of the eighteenth century and sometimes one hundred and twenty persons of the name of Bach met at the same spot. Amongst them twenty-nine were counted as musicians of eminence."[1]

Clearly a case like this, while it strikingly illustrates the tendency of talent to run in families needs far more delicate sifting before we can argue from it to hereditary genius.

The theory of a "lusus naturae" was propounded in a startling form by the late Professor Lombroso. The work done by that extraordinary man in the field of abnormal psychology is not to be measured by the extent to which his views have found general acceptance. The impulse and the stimulus which

[1] Lombroso, "The Man of Genius," Eng. Transl., pp. 139, 140.

he gave to the subject will, I am confident, remain long after many of his positive conclusions have been either transformed or consigned to a well-merited oblivion. He shone in what Mill calls the "power to bethink oneself" of fertile lines of research: he suggested methods, and hypotheses, and above all applications, of comparative psychology which other workers have followed up to better purpose than he: but his memory must always be cherished by those who realize how much rarer is the capacity to invent than the capacity to develop an invention. And what shall we say of the industry of the man who could announce as if it were the most casual and commonplace piece of statistics in morbid psychology "I have formed this conclusion from the examination of 23,602 cases"? No one however he may dissent as I do at almost every chapter from the inferences drawn can read without admiration the record of that colossal research which Lombroso brought to bear on the problems to which he had devoted his life.

The sensational announcement in which he sums up his conclusion on our subject is in these words: "Genius is a degenerative psychosis of the epileptoid group." In support of this he draws attention to the notoriously eccentric character of many distinguished persons, and he marshals a surprising number of instances where mental powers of the highest order in some direction were either combined with or followed by indisputable mental derangement. He quotes a still larger number of cases in which certain traits which accompany degeneration have been found in men of genius though it is impossible to class them definitely as degenerates. I cannot attempt here even a summary of the cumulative argument, resting

on a mass of details each of which taken by itself would be insignificant: I shall give only a few samples. He claims that examination *post mortem* of the skulls of men of genius has disclosed abnormalities which are strikingly similar to the abnormalities in the skulls of the insane; that such peculiarities as stammering, lefthandedness, precocity, somnambulism, and intermittent or double personality prevail in both classes. Chorea and epilepsy have been markedly present *e.g.* in Julius Caesar, Mohammed, Peter the Great, Napoleon, Molière, Richelieu. Melancholia is frequent—a striking instance was Goethe, and Lombroso adds in his exaggerating way "the list of great men who have committed suicide is almost endless." The same sort of external influences affect the man of genius and the lunatic; if in a particular race the proportion of the one type is high that of the other type is also high. The Jews for example furnish a remarkably large percentage of each. Thermometric and barometric conditions are notoriously significant in asylums; and Lombroso claims to be able to show from the diaries and records of men of eminence that the excellence of their work varied in some degree, other things being equal, with the season of the year at which it was done.

The collection of peculiarities of which the above is but a tiny sample certainly lends colour to the view that men of genius have very often been men of abnormal nervous organization. But any argument that rests on the empirical accumulation of facts like these seems to me to labour under three defects:—

1. The cumulative character of the evidence is very liable to be delusive. It is plausible to urge that these trifles taken singly are of no

importance but that taken together they are overwhelming. When we notice however the enormous area from which the items of the proof are drawn is there any improbability in supposing that the facts are not to be covered by any one explanation but fall under many different explanations in the different cases or classes of cases? This seems especially likely as the peculiarities are not all united in any single person but each genius or group of geniuses has its own set of morbid traits.

2. No account is taken of the "contradictory instances."
3. As an *explanation* such an hypothesis explains nothing whatever. It rather makes the problem still more mysterious, still less explicable. To call a genius insane because he is often absent-minded or because his features twitch or because he is melancholy does not touch the question of how he produces his great masterpieces. If he resembles the mentally deranged in certain assignable respects what of those other respects in which he differs?

Here as so often Lombroso was on the track of what might have been an explanation, but it was perfected in other hands than his.

> "The coincidence of genius and insanity enables us to understand the astonishing unconsciousness, instantaneousness, and intermittence of the creations of genius, whence its great resemblance to epilepsy the importance of which we shall see later and whence also the distinction between genius and talent. Talent says Jürgen-Meyer knows itself, it knows how

and why it has reached a given theory: it is not so with genius which is ignorant of the how and the why. Nothing is so involuntary as the conception of genius."[1]

This idea of genius as essentially the working of unconscious intelligence is the point of departure for the second theory which we must notice. It claims to be able to find a place for these extraordinary phenomena under that general conception of a subliminal mind which it was our task in last essay to examine.

II

We saw reason to believe that the existence of subconscious psychical activity is most clearly demonstrated in morbid or pathological cases. These are *primâ facie* at the opposite extreme from cases of genius, and one is tempted to disregard as wanton paradox a theory which finds fundamental identity between the very highest and the very lowest types of mental life. If such a view is to vindicate itself it must be by its ability to explain facts for which an explanation is not otherwise forthcoming.

One must bear in mind however that the initial improbability of such an hypothesis may easily be exaggerated. We have seen that on grounds quite independent of those which we have now to consider a kinship has been urged between genius and insanity. And though Lombroso's evidence seemed too slight and too precarious we found it much more impressive than would have been thought possible by any one who had not actually examined it. Moreover we are very

[1] Lombroso, "The Man of Genius," p. 19.

liable to be misled by a misunderstanding to which, so far as I know, Frederic Myers was the first to draw attention. He points out that genius is commonly but quite improperly thought of as being necessarily something *admirable*. Not only is there the presence of faculty of a remarkable type; the faculty must be such as may be turned to high and noble purposes. For example if a person were endowed with a memory which was incapable of forgetting, if he were obliged by his very nature to remember everything equally with everything else, we should credit such a person with extraordinary mental powers but we should not naturally speak of him as a genius. For if a man were unable to concentrate attention on any one subject in particular his peculiar endowment would be a hindrance rather than a help. Exceptional powers of obliviscence which would always act at the right time and in respect of the right material must be at least as serviceable as exceptional powers of retention: for the mind would thus be cleared of that lumber and stubble which clog its action and confuse its view. But we have no ground for including in our conception of that which constitutes genius this quality of being either useful or praiseworthy in its consequences. Psychologically speaking our concern is simply with cases of extraordinary mental power apart from all moral or practical significance which may be incidental to it.

Our main objection to Lombroso's view was that it fails to explain just that which constitutes our problem. Is that problem made in any way more intelligible if we adopt the standpoint of Myers?

"The differentia of genius," he writes "lies in an increased control over subliminal mentation": If the mathematical prodigy is able to solve difficult

problems with such rapidity that we suppose him to act by a sort of intuition because he cannot have had time to calculate we misunderstand what has occurred. He *has* calculated, and his speed in doing so arises from his possession of a far more powerful machinery than that with which we are endowed. On the task being given to him he is able to bring to bear upon it not merely the supra-liminal thinking which is all the ordinary man can employ but the vast resources of the subliminal as well. In other words those two regions of mental activity which are in most cases shut off from connexion with each other are in certain persons—and owing to causes which we cannot assign —enabled to act in co-operation.

Thus the performance is not to be described as a supplanting of the normal powers of thought by an abnormal and inexplicable power of reaching thought-results without thought-processes. It is merely an extension of the ordinary calculating energies of mind. Those barriers which hinder in most cases the concerted action of the whole personality are in these eminent persons removed, so that the genius is not a *dis*integrated but rather a supremely *re*-integrated self.

That this hypothesis would explain not a few of the phenomena in a sense in which no other hypothesis which has yet been suggested can profess to explain them I do not question. It meets the real kernel of the difficulty by offering us one way of understanding an eminently intellectual product by reference to intellectual rather than to non-intellectual machinery. But we are bound to recognize that the theory has some serious embarrassments of its own.

1. It involves acceptance of the doctrine of sub-consciousness not only in that first form for which we

have seen the evidence to be exceedingly strong, but in that second form which we have judged to be decidedly less convincing.

Frederic Myers felt confident that subliminal action is a feature of the normal not less than of abnormal mind. If we follow him here we shall find his idea of "removed partitions" in the case of genius a very tempting interpretation of the facts. And I am far from denying that he may be right. But in estimating the evidence we must remember those considerations which led us in last essay to regard Myers's argument in its second or more ambitious stage as exaggerated.

The point is this: have we or have we not proved subliminal action in the ordinary mind to be a *vera causa?* Do we know it to exist on independent grounds or are we inventing it simply that it may serve as an explanation for those phenomena of genius that are otherwise intractable? I quite admit that if there are certain phenomena which on Myers's assumption can be understood and which cannot be understood on any other assumption which we have yet devised, this is in itself considerable ground for entertaining his view. But his argument would be very much stronger if we had conclusive evidence for the reality of that factor which he invokes apart from its competence to relieve us from this particular difficulty. We must bear in mind that explanation would everywhere be much easier than it is if we held ourselves free to manufacture causal forces at will.

2. It is difficult on Myers's hypothesis to understand why genius should show that one-sidedness which is its notable peculiarity. If for example a great military commander devises the most skilful dispositions of his troops apparently by intuition but

really by that increased reasoning machinery with which control over the subliminal region endows him, why does he not manifest extraordinary reasoning powers in other kinds of material as well? Why does the "calculating boy" who astonishes us with his arithmetical feats show no special aptitude in any other department? I have been told by a friend with long experience as a teacher of mathematics that he once had a pupil whose facility in mental arithmetic would have been to him incredible if he had not actually witnessed it; but the boy was not only below the general level of intelligence in other respects, he was actually among the poorest mathematicians in the class. And Myers himself with that sterling candour which always characterized him has emphasized this same fact. He has tabulated as follows the mental capacities of those calculators regarding whom he was able to obtain information:

TABLE OF PRINCIPAL ARITHMETICAL PRODIGIES.[1]

Name.	Age when gift was observed.	Duration of gift.	Intelligence.
Ampère	4	?	eminent
Bidder	10	through life	good
Buxton	?	?	low
Colburn	6	few years	average
Dase	boyhood	through life	very low
Fuller	boyhood	?	low
Gauss	3	?	eminent
Mangiamele	10	few years	average?
Mondeux	10	few years	low
Prolongeau	6	few years	low
Safford	6	few years	good
"Mr. Van R. of Utica"	6	few years	average?
Whately	3	few years	good

No tables could more strikingly show the extremely specialized character of the endowment in question.

[1] "Human Personality" (Abridged Edition), p. 66.

So far as they go they seem to indicate deficiency rather than excellence of general intellect and to justify the apprehensions which a parent feels if his boy is an abnormal calculator. "The curse of precocity" is a phrase not without a meaning. And I urge that it is very difficult indeed to understand this limitation of special capacity to a single sphere with a corresponding incapacity in other spheres if genius be merely an increased control of faculties "to some degree innate in all of us."

3. Again we must surely make allowance for wide differences of quality and texture in that nerve-apparatus which is concerned in works of specialized skill.

In revealing to us more and more of the wonders of the nervous system physiology has made it plain that not a few feats which were once unintelligible without the assumption of rational control require no such hypothesis. Experiments upon animals, *e.g.* upon frogs deprived of the cerebral hemispheres and thus reduced to a state of unconsciousness show that the co-ordinations among the reflexes are sufficient to produce movements that precisely counterfeit the movements of intelligence. And corresponding to those co-ordinations that are congenitally fixed there are many that become fixed in the course of practice and habituation. M. Bergson speaks of the performances of certain fish in dealing with their prey as showing the combined skill of a consummate anatomist and a consummate surgeon: no one however will suggest that these instinctive actions need for explanation the sub-conscious working in the fish of anatomical or surgical learning. The upper limit of attainment for either great visual memory or great auditory memory or great tactile sensibility or

many other physical distinctions cannot be fixed with any confidence: possible 'short-cuts in the brain' are indefinitely numerous: and quite enough of them which would once have been dismissed as incredible have now been fully demonstrated to restrain us from setting arbitrary boundaries to those which may yet come to light. A particular illustration of this will be found in the Appendix to this essay.

But while the explanation offered by Myers for these arithmetical feats seems exposed to the difficulties I have mentioned, there is as yet no other explanation which does not involve still greater difficulties and in the absence of an alternative I think it is the best working hypothesis.

Cases such as those of Ampère, Gauss, and Whately appear to me the most significant. There the gift made its appearance at so early a stage that one cannot think of it as the result of practice however admirably adapted to arithmetical work the original brain-tissue may have been. What we have to explain is how a child of three can prior to any considerable training in calculation spontaneously calculate with a speed and accuracy that far surpass the attainments of his elders. To refer this simply to some unknown endowment of brain matter is to take refuge in the sphere of the unknown: an expedient such as that would relieve us from all possible enigmas. It must be pointed out that we have no real analogue in any acknowledged performance of the nervous system to justify us in thinking possible such a feat as this. One can understand a child born with extreme visual sensitiveness, and it would be rash to say how far such a gift might reach: for it is merely an extension in degree of one's normal faculty. But of what normal process can we regard that of the calculating

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boy as an extension in degree? There is no real parallel forthcoming, and if we mean to explain the occurrences at all we must look not to physiology but elsewhere.

The rapid calculators often confess themselves unable to say how they act. They say that they announce "the first number that comes into their heads," and somehow this turns out to be correct. "Buxton would talk freely while doing his questions, that being no molestation or hindrance to him." They speak of it sometimes as a 'sort of natural instinct,' or as 'intuitive.' In some other cases there is conscious calculation but on so enormous a scale and in such immature minds that it seems impossible to look upon this as the whole explanation. For example who can believe that the following well-known case was one of ordinary arithmetical power on an exceptional scale? The child was Benjamin Blyth who afterwards became a noted Scottish engineer.

> "When almost six years of age Ben was walking with his father before breakfast when he said, "Papa, at what hour was I born?" He was told 4 a.m., and he then asked, "What o'clock is it at present? He was told 7.50 a.m. The child walked on a few hundred yards, then turned to his father and stated the number of seconds he had lived. My father noted down the figures, made the calculation when he got home, and told Ben he was 172,800 seconds wrong, to which he got a ready reply: "Oh papa, you have left out two days for the leap years—1820 and 1824"—which was the case. This latter fact of the extra day in leap year is not known to many children of six, and if anyone will try to teach an ordinary child of those

years the multiplication table up to 12 × 12 he will be better able to realize how extraordinary was this calculation for such an infant." [1]

I think that Myers was right in selecting the case of the mathematical prodigy for special examination just because it is so clear-cut and one can rule out as impossible not a few vague suggestions to which the complexity of other cases gives free scope. That his view is explanatory in the sense of making clear to us why certain persons should have this abnormal power while others have not cannot of course be pretended. But if we have seen ground to believe in sub-conscious mental action we have made these performances one degree less mysterious by showing an intellectual cause for an intellectual result. The conclusion then which I put forward very tentatively indeed on the problem of genius is as follows :

It is idle to seek for any *single* principle under which all types of genius may be classed as special varieties. There is not *one* explanation : there are many. In a large proportion of cases, especially in the fine arts, the clue is to be sought in a congenital endowment of delicate nerve-sensibility in some one direction. Thus we must understand, in so far as we can speak of understanding at all, the great painters, musicians, sculptors ; and in some measure the fertility of imagination, the boundless wealth of imagery which marks the poet seems traceable to exceptional facility of action in the association areas of the brain That vivid exactness of metaphor by which the energies of one sense are reinforced by the pictorial stores of another points to paths of lower resistance between the nerve areas concerned in the mind of

[1] Story related by Mr. E. Blyth : quoted by Prof. W. F. Barrett in his "Psychical Research," p. 37.

the poet as compared with the prosaic mind of the ordinary man. There is another group of cases in which powers of so unusual an order that they seem to demand special explanation are in all probability higher only in degree than those of the normal mind and are gradually produced by more than normal practice. Carlyle may have been right in attributing some cases of apparent genius to infinite painstaking: that facility of brain-action which is sometimes congenital may well be at other times the result of habituation: and the nerve shortcuts become so rapid that one can scarcely believe them to have been slowly "worn deep" in the plastic tissue. We know quite enough about the feats which the nervous system indisputably performs to be chary in setting limits to it. But while interpretations of this kind will meet not a few of those reputed examples of genius there are others which cannot thus be dealt with: and for these the hypothesis of sub-conscious action seems on the whole the most satisfactory view. I refer to those performances in which without any conscious reasoning results are reached of a nature to which we have no reason to think that any nerve-process is in the least adequate. Of the mathematical prodigy Myers's interpretation seems still the only one that faces the facts. We have here all the evidence we could have that there is no conscious calculation: and we have no ground at all to think that the nervous mechanism can act untaught as an arithmetical "ready-reckoner." But if this is the clue to one set of cases it is very unlikely that it should be without relevance to any others. Particularly in the products of mechanical invention it seems likely that unconscious mathematics, if such a thing is known to be possible, should play a part. And there are not a

few types of genius belonging to other classes and spheres of activity to which our alternative explanations may be adequate but where they seem strained almost to breaking point. In the absence of any evidence that unconscious mentality is a *vera causa* we should not be justified in employing it to elucidate these; once we have real ground for believing it to exist there is no impropriety in using it wherever it fits more readily the facts to be explained.

APPENDIX

I subjoin some notes of a case to which my attention was drawn by Dr. W. J. Maguire, now an Insurance Commissioner for Ireland, and lately Demonstrator in Pathological Neurology in the Queen's University of Belfast.

A.B. is a lithographic artist by trade and comes of a family of somewhat highly strung neurotic type. He discovered by accident that he possessed a memory of quite unusual power, and he was subjected by his friends to a series of tests to find out how far he could go. A set of ordinary playing cards was used for the purpose: on each card a row of six or eight large numbers running to about six digits each was written: the figures were combined in as perplexing a fashion as possible, *e.g.*

Jack of Spades.

371,429	70,894
835,602	858,835
198,357	9,963
27,391	526,318
3,872	

Each card he looked at very intently for a few minutes and then laid it aside. On being given the face value of any particular card of the fifty-two he is able to repeat without mistake the whole series of numbers that have

been written on it. I have myself tested this over and over again with as much variation as possible and find that his performance is genuine.

We then tried an experiment of a different kind. A collection of small knick-knacks was set before him on a tray, and he was asked to study them carefully for a couple of minutes and then write them down—the well-known parlour game. His success in this was in no way remarkable. I have often seen it better done by persons who claim no special memory powers at all. I then gave him a series of books, twenty or more in a row, of different coloured bindings whose shades were very close to one another although distinct. After studying them for about half a minute he was able to draw an outline of the set in order with the names of the shades and with the shape of each book approximately correct. I venture to think that most persons would find this a much more severe test of the visual memory than the tray experiment that preceded.

The account which he gives of his own performance is highly interesting especially when one remembers the well-known researches of Galton on that odd curiosity "The Colour-Form." According to A.B. all his freaks of memory depend on his sensitiveness to colour—and here probably lies the attraction which drew him to the lithographic trade. Every digit has been associated in his mind as far back as he can remember with some particular colour shade. He can give no intelligible reason why, *e.g.* 9 should be thought of as red: but he has somehow always so associated it. Moreover, he has constructed a series of fantastic forms, each of them tinted in the appropriate way to symbolize the digits. His scheme differs from those quoted by Galton in that the figures are not arranged *within* a number-shape but each has its own specific shape to itself. But he resembles the persons examined by Galton in his impatience of any sort of arrangement except his own. The others seemed to him stupid and meaningless though to most persons every such scheme would seem quite as stupid and as meaningless as every other. I lent him a set of well-known number-forms by way of testing this and he returned it to me with some irritation

remarking that he had "scarcely looked at it: it only confuses me."

This case appears to fall under the explanation by highly specialized nerve-sensibility in a particular direction. He has no extraordinary visual powers: but as is well known from other cases great visual memory need not be combined with any special keenness of sight. Our tests however went to show that even in respect of memory for objects he is not above average except in the single detail of colour. This enables him to recall the numbers on the cards: for as he studies the set upon each card in turn there rises before his mind the corresponding set of coloured shapes which become stamped upon his memory ineffaceably. The colouring upon the face of the card is thus connected with the series of shades that are associated with the numbers: and on being asked, *e.g.* to repeat the figures upon the King of Hearts he visualizes the colour forms and translates them off in accordance with his code. Explanation by reference to sub-conscious action appears to be in such a case superfluous.

IV

THE GROWTH OF PUBLIC OPINION PSYCHOLOGICALLY CONSIDERED[1]

"President Garfield illustrated this point of view in an often-quoted passage of his speech to the Republican Convention of 1880:—

> 'I have seen the sea lashed into fury and tossed into spray, and its grandeur moves the soul of the dullest man. But I remember that it is not the billows but the calm level of the sea from which all heights and depths are measured. Not here in this brilliant circle where fifteen thousand men and women are gathered is the destiny of the Republic to be decreed for the next four years, but by four millions of Republican firesides where the thoughtful voters with wives and children about them, with the calm thoughts inspired by love of home and country, with the history of the past, the hopes of the future, and knowledge of the great men who have adorned and blessed our nation in days gone by. There God prepares the verdict that shall determine the wisdom of our work to-night.'

"But the divine oracle whether in America or in England turns out too often only to be a tired householder reading the headlines and personal paragraphs of his party newspaper, and half-consciously forming mental habits of mean suspicion or national arrogance."

MR. GRAHAM WALLAS.

IT is the veriest commonplace that public opinion rules us all. In countless ways we do obeisance to it, and we find it a somewhat capricious and exacting sovereign, quick to take offence, difficult to placate with apologies, and rather insistent that a transgressor must "earn his pardon." It dictates for many of us the sort of house in which we shall live, the style in which we shall dress, and the hour at which we shall dine. Only within very narrow limits can we in

[1] Address delivered to Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, 6th Feb., 1912.

such matters indulge our personal tastes, and for any considerable variation from established usage we feel it necessary to make copious and shamefaced explanations. How many perfectly sound and serviceable garments are every year laid aside or given away just because fickle fashion has decreed a new model, and her subjects cannot choose but follow. At her whim the most popular amusement of last season gives place to some other which may be intrinsically much inferior, but which everyone must adopt just because it is being adopted by everyone else. The popularity of a game waxes and wanes in obedience to no sort of rational principle that we can detect, but with a rapidity with which it is often irksome and sometimes impossible to keep pace.

In the more serious concerns of life the same tendency is seen. In our judgments of literature we are the slaves of leadership. You may remember that exquisite essay by Goldsmith describing "The Fame-Machine." When Dr. Johnson applies for admission to that vehicle on the strength of his Dictionary, he is told that he has presented the wrong credentials—he ought to have submitted the "Rambler," for the coachman had heard the ladies in the Court of Apollo speak of it with a great deal of favour. It is so with most of the literary criticisms that are passed—they are motived by what someone has heard said by someone else. A few stray private opinions that happen to be shared by the right group of people crystallize into what is called a "public opinion," and the series forthwith begins to advance not in arithmetical but in geometrical progression. "Between ourselves," said George III., "Shakespeare is a very dull fellow, but it does not do to say so." "Read Browning if you really like to," said a literary

adviser of the public lately, "but if you have to burst a blood-vessel trying to admire him give him up."

So too in matters of social, or of political, or of economic interest there is in every group of persons a set of orthodox conventional opinions and nine out of ten of the group repeat them without hesitation and without reflection. More than this—those judgments that we have simply absorbed from our environment in the same way in which we have adopted its dress, its language, its amusements, we commonly suppose ourselves to have reached by logic and reasoning. One man is a free trader and another a tariff reformer, one a collectivist and another an individualist, in virtue far more of the kind of community in which they have lived than of the intellectual processes through which they have passed. They will seldom confess this. The utmost they will confess is that they cannot give on demand the reasons that have convinced them, but they feel sure that the reasons are producible, and that if they were given a chance of reflection and of reference to those books and newspapers which formed their minds the reasons could be produced.

Now it is of the first consequence, if we are going to understand our social life, that we should trace this thing to its psychological roots. How does a public opinion on any matter grow up? How does it begin? And after it has begun how does it develop? What are the steps that intervene between the stage at which it is a mere whim or eccentricity of one or two individuals and the stage at which it is the settled conviction or even the overmastering passion of a community, so strong that the individual questions or resists it at his peril? Can psychology tell us anything about this? If it can it

ought assuredly to be listened to, for it will help us to understand and, consequently, to use one of the biggest social forces in the world. We give strained attention to all that science can disclose to us regarding the powers of nature, for we anticipate that once we understand them we shall be able to harness them to our purposes. Shall we not similarly follow up every clue we can find to those subtle and hidden processes which make our social life and determine our social future?

I ask your permission to define public opinion in a way which at first sight seems a scarcely legitimate interpretation of the phrase. The only objection however that can be raised to it is that it includes more than the words as commonly used appear to cover. I include for my present purpose under the title "public opinion" that whole inheritance of beliefs, principles, and tastes into which each member of a community is invited to enter by reason of his membership in that community. Now clearly much of this inheritance consists of convictions which one does not naturally refer to as "opinions." It includes the truths of science which come readily and necessarily into the mental equipment of a civilized European and which would not come to him in the same way if he were born an islander of the Torres Straits. The law of the Conservation of Energy, the doctrine of the causation of disease by the activity of micro-organisms, the Copernican Astronomy, these are elements of our intellectual wealth for which in a very real sense we may say that we have never toiled, but into which as educated Europeans we have entered as bequests from the culture of the past. We do not however speak of a public opinion in such provinces as these—in mathematics, in surgery, in electricity.

We speak of *informed* opinion, and of traditional prejudices against which this informed opinion often has to contend. In every sphere of discourse which has developed into the material of a science, wherever it has become possible to apply either precise measurements or precise canons of induction we naturally speak of knowledge, and we signalize the distinction by insisting that these are no mere matters of opinion but matters of ascertained and demonstrated truth.

Let me then make clear that in alluding to a belief as sanctioned by public opinion, I by no means imply that it is a belief not yet beyond the reach of reasonable doubt. It may quite easily be one regarding which it is no longer possible for intelligent and instructed persons to differ. I mean merely that it is not the tenet simply of an isolated individual or of a few isolated individuals: it is not a judgment reached by a lonely thinker working apart from the intellectual influence of his fellows and guided by his individual reason alone: it has already secured for itself in some degree the force of a social tradition, and we have to examine by what machinery this force has been acquired, how it is sustained, and how it is either impaired or augmented.

Put quite simply, what is the process or what are the processes by which an opinion that was in the first instance the opinion of somebody else becomes my opinion as well owing to the operation of his mind upon mine? What are the modes of mental interaction by which this result is explained?

1. The first mode is that of logical reasoning. I call it the first not because it is the most frequent or the most effective but because it is the most obvious. It is the way in which the mind of the teacher works upon the mind of the pupil in persuading him to

believe that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are always and necessarily equal. There is no appeal either to sentiment or to authority: that school was in a bad way indeed in mathematical teaching where the boys had so much respect for the masters that they accepted their word as experts for the truth of propositions like this and waived all claim to have them proved. In such cases the action of other minds upon our own is reduced to a minimum: we seem not to be acquiring information from without but to be unfolding information that is already implicitly present within. If we may trust Plato's picture of Socrates, the great founder of scientific method was so impressed by this aspect of education as to base upon it an argument for the pre-natal existence of the soul. But though in one sense it is plainly true that our acceptance of mathematical truth does not depend upon the influence that other minds exert upon ours it is equally plain that even here such influence is by no means negligible. I do not believe that there are five and only five possible sections of the cone each of them represented by an equation of the second degree *because* someone has told me so: yet if no one had ever told me so it is extremely unlikely that I should ever have become aware of it. Euclid's elements are not a body of truth imparted ab extra, yet if there were no one to teach Euclid's elements in a school the implicit knowledge that the boys already possess would never bear much fruit. Sit down, said Mill, in a calm hour and reflect on what difference if any exists between virtual knowledge and absolute ignorance.

Thus it seems that even in the sphere of the demonstrative sciences we cannot get on if we decline all influence from minds other than our own. Public

opinion in the sense in which I have defined it affects us in astronomy no less than it affects us in politics: but its way of affecting us is different. It works purely by logical argument, by the necessary "laws of thought."

2. The second mode of operation of mind upon mind I shall entitle summarily the non-logical, and we shall soon see that we must subdivide it into several others.

Refer for a moment to that three-fold classification of mental processes upon which psychologists insist. We can distinguish, they say, three aspects in the mind's attitude towards an object of thought; it may be simply aware of it, may feel pleased or displeased by it, and may will regarding it. In technical language there is a cognitive, a feeling or affective, and a striving or conative mode of conscious experience. Now what we need to grasp clearly if we are to understand mental interaction is that each of these modes of experience is infectious and that they are separately infectious. It is a merit of recent psychologists to have drawn attention for the first time in anything like a systematic way to this fact or rather to this group of facts in human nature.

And they have not only pointed out the existence of these three inlets of infection between mind and mind: they have appropriated to each of them a specific name which ought to stereotype the discovery. We have long learned that if a psychical fact has not been given a name its existence will not continue to be acknowledged. The history of our science is full of examples of this tyranny of words. Hence the social psychologists have made haste to provide themselves with a nomenclature. The word "suggestibility" denotes the fact that we are liable to infection

on the cognitive side: the word "sympathy" has been specialized for psychological purposes to mean our tendency to be infected on the feeling side: and the word "imitation" stands for our impulse to share the striving or conative activities with which we are brought into contact.

The main thesis which I wish to commend to you is that in these three tendencies, suggestibility, sympathy, and imitativeness, we have the most potent of the causes which determine public opinion. And that there may be no ambiguity about what I mean by this I shall re-state it negatively: I shall tell you what it is which I wish to deny. I deny that more than a small fraction of those beliefs, principles and tastes which make up the content of our minds was reached either by reasoning on our part or by the operation of other minds through reasoning processes on ours.

(*a*) Let us begin with "suggestibility." "Suggestion," writes Dr. McDougall, "is a process of communication resulting in the acceptance with conviction of the communicated proposition in the absence of logically adequate grounds for its acceptance."[1]

Consider the enormous development in modern times of the art of advertising. The advertiser wishes to create a public opinion in favour of a certain commodity which he has to sell. It may be a patent drug or a patent food or a patent mechanical appliance. How does he set to work? Not certainly by way of proof. He knows that the world is not ruled by logic. He issues placards bearing the name of his invention in letters six feet high—just the name, nothing more. He

[1] "Introduction to Social Psychology," p. 97.

employs pictorial artists who have made this sort of work into a life-profession to design new and startling posters which will demonstrate nothing but will suggest much. At every street corner as we pass we have it borne in upon us that So-and-so is the man of the hour. It may be that his likeness with an alluring forefinger pointing to his invention stares at us from the walls. He pays a hundred pounds for the right to monopolize for a single day the front page of a great newspaper and he uses it to print in huge type the name of the thing he has for sale. Sometimes he makes his advertisement more effective by turning the letters upside down. The wiseacres shake their heads and ask "Does he take people for fools who are going to be influenced by antics like that?" Whether he takes people for fools or not it is clear that he takes them for just what they are. The immense fortunes that advertisers have accumulated are there to show what magnificent psychologists the men must have been.

Against this way of manufacturing public opinion logic as a rule struggles in vain. There is something pathetic about the effort of the British Medical Journal to expose and discredit the vendors of quack remedies. To expose them is easy: to discredit them is very different. Their credit is of the kind that survives exposure. You may prove beyond the possibility of question that there is nothing marvellous in the drug that someone has put in the market and called by a fancy name except the truly marvellous price which he is able somehow to obtain for it. You may show that the same drug can be procured and administered under much more reliable conditions and at one-tenth of the cost by applying to a regularly qualified practitioner. But it will all come to nothing. The quack

may not understand physiology but he understands human nature, and a few more fetching posters will counteract all the reports of analytical chemists.

Anyone who has taken part in a Parliamentary election in a populous constituency will tell you that the one thing needful is a taking photograph of the candidate. I met myself during the last election a canvasser in black despair who said to me "Our case is utterly hopeless. It is within a fortnight of the poll and I have no photos yet. I am asked for them in nearly every house." Mr. Graham Wallas who knows as much about such contests as most people has emphasized the same point. In his fascinating book "Human Nature in Politics," he writes as follows:

> "The tactics of an election consist largely of contrivances by which this immediate emotion of personal affection may be set up. The candidate is advised to show himself continually, to give away prizes, to say a few words at the end of other people's speeches,—all under circumstances which offer little or no opportunity for the formation of a reasoned opinion of his merits, but many opportunities for the rise of a purely instinctive affection among those present. His portrait is periodically distributed, and is more effective if it is a good, that is to say a distinctive, than if it is a flattering likeness. Best of all is a photograph which brings his ordinary existence sharply forward by representing him in his garden smoking a pipe or reading a newspaper. A simple-minded supporter whose affection has been thus worked up will probably try to give an intellectual explanation of it. He will say that the man of whom he may know

> really nothing except that he was photographed in a Panama hat with a fox-terrier is the 'kind of man we want,' and that therefore he has decided to support him." [1]

One might multiply illustrations indefinitely. The principle that underlies these oddities of human nature is simple. It may be stated thus: Wherever there is not already an opposing system of ideas in the mind the bare suggestion of some new idea has some tendency to carry conviction of its truth, and the more frequently and vividly the suggestion is made the more likely one is in the end to accept it.

I have said 'wherever there is not already an opposing system of ideas in the mind.' For suggestion to work there must be an open field. We may assume that the advertisement of a patent medicine does not suggest with any great strength to a doctor as he passes and reads it that he should buy the medicine, though it may suggest some other thoughts which are not without vigour. And a politician of the opposite camp will no doubt scoff as he sees a photograph which depicts the candidate in yet a new pose. It is in those who have no convictions on the matter that machinery such as I am describing will produce convictions. And it will on the average produce them over quite a sufficient area to satisfy the advertiser and the solicitor of votes.

We sometimes say in scorn about someone who is succeeding beyond what we think to be his merits that he has 'hypnotized' the public. We may be nearer the truth than we suppose. For whatever may be the physical account of hypnotism it is probably on the mental side nothing but an extreme example of suggestibility. The person entranced

[1] "Human Nature in Politics," pp. 30, 31.

believes everything he is told and does everything he is ordered. He seems to be living for the time in a new world, shut off much more completely from all commerce with his own physical surroundings than if he were in a deep sleep, for he feels, wills and acts at the bidding of the hypnotist. Thus his field of consciousness has been made extremely narrow: the operator can suggest to him ideas which will have exclusive possession of his mind, and in the absence of any conflicting ideas they will work themselves out in action. Only new affections can expel old ones: the conditions of tenancy in the mind have never been expressed with greater psychological exactness than in the figure of the strong man armed who keepeth the house and will in no case be cast out until a stronger than he shall bind him and then he shall spoil his goods.

The study of hypnotism has thus given us a clue to the workings of the normal mind in a region that would otherwise be inexplicable. That way of acting which is seen on a magnified scale in the entranced subject is present on a smaller scale in every one of us, disguised and modified by antagonistic ways of working that are there simultaneously.

It is to the same principle of suggestibility that we must look for the explanation of what is often called "the enthusiasm of numbers." How many of us have been carried off our feet by the eloquence of a speaker in a great mass meeting, and have wondered next day when we read the newspaper report what it can have been that moved us! Those who were thrilled by the late Canon Liddon in St. Paul's, or by John Henry Newman at the Brompton Oratory have been keenly disappointed when they read the sermons again in cold print. That way of convincing which

proceeds by proof does not lose but rather gains in cogency when it comes to us through the medium of black and white. It is the reverse with the arts of the orator. And the very same speech if it were delivered to a handful of people scattered over a large auditorium would have no such power. We are stirred because first a few and then a crowd in our vicinity have first been stirred and we have caught the contagion. In consequence arguments and refutations win an easy acceptance while we are listening to them, and perish perhaps next day at the first breath of criticism.

So far I have been speaking of "simple suggestion," *i.e.* of the power which another's belief just because it is his belief has to communicate itself to us. But a greater part is played by what Dr. McDougall has called "prestige suggestion."

We tend to share the convictions of those whom for any reason we have come to regard with reverence and affection. Just as the child looks upon the word of his parents as final on all things in heaven and earth so the adult has his heroes who can lead him whithersoever they choose. The ground on which our hero has won our homage may be utterly unconnected with that sphere of opinion in which we are nevertheless willing to trust him. That eminence in one department which justly entitles him to speak therein with authority may not furnish him with credentials at all—it may even so far as it goes disqualify him—elsewhere: we bow to him all the same. A great American admiral comes home after a successful campaign, and a large section of his countrymen want him to stand for the Presidency of the Republic. The Duke of Wellington returns with the laurels of the Peninsular War and afterwards of

Waterloo and a grateful people welcome him later as Prime Minister. Only the other day I was told by a friend who had been wont to scoff at the work of the Society for Psychical Research that he thought after all there might be something in it: I asked him why he had changed his opinion: and he told me that he had noticed in the list of the council of the society the name of a prominent politician whom he revered. It so happens that the statesman in question is an extremely acute and well-informed student of such questions: but my friend did not know anything about him in this reference. So long as he had merely the word of men who had given their lives largely to this pursuit alone he was not in the least persuaded that there was any value connected with it; but as soon as he heard of a busy politician who was making this the hobby of his leisure hours he gave in his allegiance on the spot. Schoolmasters have found that boys who are extremely idle under a teacher who has only his learning to recommend him are roused to enthusiasm when the staff acquires an international football player: work was not fashionable before: but if a "blue" will only pledge his honour to them that it is the proper thing to learn some Latin grammar the situation is transformed. When the boys become older their idol changes, but they remain idolators. A solitary thinker in his study develops some theory about social life or some project of social reform: he writes about it in the newspapers if he can get a newspaper to print it: his idea is out of the common and if anyone pays any attention to him at all he and his crack-brained scheme become perhaps the joke of the hour. But if he can only form a society and get certain people to join it who know nothing whatever about what they

are doing but whose names are otherwise well-known his success is assured. If he can capture a general, or a millionaire, or a prince of the blood, or a queen of musical comedy, or a poet, or a writer of sensational novels, he has a vantage ground that will not be easily moved. There was nothing in it worth considering while it was advocated only by someone who understood: but we must not despise a scientific or a philosophical theory which has the patronage of a person of wealth or of social or artistic popularity. The magazines that used to return his manuscript bid against each other for anything that he will give them, send representatives to ask him for the details of his private life, what time he breakfasts, what is his golfing handicap, whether he is a smoker,—and station men with cameras to try for a snap-shot as he goes for his walk. There is little of the cold clear light of reason about this. Truly there is nothing that succeeds like success. There is likewise nothing that is more unstable. For the forces that made the hero can unmake him: and when some other star rises the old one readily wanes. Someone else with incompatible theories and projects may become the fashion and no man can serve two masters.

(*b*) But the mind's liability to be infected by other minds would be very much understated if we thought only of *cognitive* processes. We are made to share perhaps still more easily in the feelings than in the ideas or the beliefs of those around us. What has psychology got to say about the action of "sympathy" in producing public opinion?

Here as in so many other places we must clear away that misunderstanding of our mental life which has come to be known as the "intellectualist fallacy."

Baldly put it comes to this that a feeling cannot be aroused until some idea has first been aroused from which the feeling may follow as a logical deduction. If I am afraid it must be because I foresee something which is going to cause me pain, or at least something which I think is going to cause me pain. If I am joyful it must be because I have been made aware of something which I rightly or wrongly believe is going to confer upon me some advantage. Against such a view I wish to urge that these and all other emotional states can and often do arise immediately, as inferences from nothing intellectual whatsoever, but by sheer contagion from some other mind which is already experiencing them.

If one animal in a herd becomes for any reason terrified, panic quickly spreads throughout the whole body. Why? Is it because the neighbours of the frightened animal, observing the signs of fear, begin to speculate about the cause, and argue that so sensible and so shrewd a critic as their comrade would not be moved in this way without justification? Is the process similar to the increasing agitation of the public mind which would ensue if the Prime Minister announced at a Guildhall Banquet that he viewed foreign affairs with grave alarm? Is the stampede of a herd of buffalo to be interpreted as the outcome of any such developed train of reasoning? And is the smile on the face of the young infant as it looks at the smiling face of its mother the result of an expectation of coming advantage like that which lights up the features of the speculator when his stocks begin to rise? Extreme cases like these ought to give intellectualism pause. We cannot at this time of day give any credence to the old expedients of escape for the intellectualist theorizers in their

difficulty. Instinct they used to say must be, if not genuine or actual intelligence at least intelligence in disguise, lapsed intelligence, nascent intelligence, unconscious intelligence, at all costs intelligence of some description. The story-teller in Herodotus was proof against all criticism when he 'carried his tale into the region of the invisible,' and if we will only agree to give the intellectualizers a blank cheque they will draw a sufficient amount from the Bank of the Unconscious to tide them over all embarrassments past, present, and to come. This generation of psychologists does not feel like issuing such cheques. It is to me impossible to believe that the infant smiles for any deeper reason than just because its mother has smiled first. Emotion begets emotion unaided by any non-emotional auxiliaries whatsoever. And he who insists on knowing why it should do so may go on to ask why the eye should see or the ear should hear.

Now this tendency to immediate sympathetic reaction does not come to an abrupt halt when we pass either from animal to human or from infant to adult consciousness. We see it most conspicuously in the great mass movements political, industrial, religious, which while they lasted, have turned the world upside down. Such upheavals are sometimes salutary: but whether they are salutary or pernicious once the emotional blaze has been lit up it spreads with the rapidity of a prairie fire. If reason, sober judgment, settled principles are with us it is well: if they are not we go on without them. You may remember Macaulay's lurid description of the riot headed by Lord George Gordon in 1780. Speaking in the House of Commons on the imperative need for popular education he said:

> "Without the shadow of a grievance, at the summons of a madman, a hundred thousand people rise in insurrection. During a whole week there is anarchy in the greatest and wealthiest of European cities. The Parliament is besieged; your predecessor sits trembling in his chair, and expects every moment to see the door beaten in by the ruffians whose roar he hears all round the house. The peers are pulled out of their coaches. The bishops in their lawn are forced to fly over the tiles. The chapels of foreign ambassadors, buildings made sacred by the law of nations, are destroyed. The house of the Chief Justice is demolished. The little children of the Prime Minister are taken out of their beds and laid in their nightclothes on the table of the Horse Guards, the only safe asylum from the fury of the rabble. The prisons are opened. Highwaymen, housebreakers, murderers come forth to swell the mob by which they have been set free. Thirty-six fires are blazing at once in London."

How does such a thing as this happen? There is no explanation but the frank avowal of a contagiousness in emotion; not one in a thousand of the mob that followed Lord George Gordon had either a grievance or a purpose that he could have put into words. The leader no doubt, insane as he was, thought he had a genuine mission and a genuine ground for violence. But it was not by reasoning his supporters into agreement with him that he roused their fury. His passion summoned up theirs with no intervening intellectual link.

Or take a movement on a far larger scale: take the Crusades about which Mr. Steven has written

so discerningly in his recent book entitled "The Psychology of the Christian Soul." You remember that saddest, that most tragic of all those misguided enterprises, the crusade of the children. Twenty thousand about the age of ten gathered in Northern Germany alone and nothing could turn them aside from taking ship for Palestine. And as Mr. Steven very appositely points out emotional fanaticism of this sort may quite as easily be found in anti-religious as in religious upheavals. He instances the grotesque excesses of the anti-clerical movement in France by which a revolution that had begun in an heroic struggle for liberty made itself ridiculous by its revivals of a dead paganism.

One might go on illustrating indefinitely—from the holy wars of the east, from anti-Semitism, from the born orator who can play upon the emotional chords of his audience as upon a harp, from the panic in a burning theatre. But what I wish especially to emphasize is the closeness of the connexion between such forms of public excitement and the deliverances of what is called public opinion.

You cannot keep your emotion and your judgment in water-tight compartments. If one is uppermost it will try to drag the other into conformity with it. The cold clear thinker will try to make his feelings adjust themselves to his thought. The impassioned devotee will compel himself to think in the way in which he already feels. He will cast about for something to pass muster as an argument that will prove the situation of things to be such as to justify the tempest in his soul. If there are no real arguments he will invent spurious arguments and he will persuade himself that he believes in them. And for this purpose he will systematically confuse the

reasons by which he defends his behaviour with the causes by which his behaviour was initiated.

(*c*) But after all conduct as Matthew Arnold has told us is three-fourths of life: and it is in the assimilation by one person of the ways of acting of another that our principle is most profusely illustrated. We shall greatly err if we think of conduct as only determined by and not as also determining opinion. As the old aphorism has it:

> "Errors in the life breed errors in the brain,
> And these reciprocally those again."

Whether our modes of behaviour be right or wrong, for good or for evil they are potent influences in shaping our opinions. And our modes of behaviour are fixed for us by our impulse to imitate more than they are fixed by any other influence whatsoever.

How for example do we by the progressive accumulation of similarities gradually build up what we call national characteristics? There is a national way of dressing and a national way of walking, national gestures and a national intonation, national architecture, national taste in music and painting, a national way of laying out a garden, a national etiquette (sometimes far more imperative than the moral law), a national way of cooking one's dinner, a national way of serving it and a national game to play after it is finished. The racial stamp is everywhere. But is it really racial? Does a Frenchman like to eat snails because he is by descent a Frenchman or because he has passed his life in a country where snails are eaten? Dr. McDougall in his book on Social Psychology supposes the case of an English infant a few days old taken to France and brought up exactly like a French infant. Will this child of

English birth when it grows up hate all snails and demand roast beef? You can judge for yourselves the probability.

Now this intensely strong impulse to imitate in conduct reports itself clearly in its reaction upon national beliefs. There is nothing that is socially stronger than what has been called 'the cake of custom.' In a primitive community there grows up a set of tribal habits. In a more developed civilization we get traditions: and the most emancipated of us all, the man who boasts most loudly that he cares nothing for precedents and that he proposes to create precedents for himself is not long in falling into channels and grooves as rigid as those from which he escaped. A new nation or an old nation attempting to start its affairs once more from the beginning may proclaim that for its purposes this is the year I. But if you watch them for a little you quickly notice that they are living in anything but the year I, that what they suppose to be a new creation of their own reason is nothing but a more or less clumsy revival of the past. How hard it is for anyone of us to believe that the thing he has been doing all his life may be profoundly wrong! How potent, how decisive are these replies to his critics:

1. It is sanctioned by immemorial usage.
2. What was good enough for my ancestors is good enough for me.
3. I have done it in this way for ten, twenty, forty years.

An individual acquires such habits by imitating someone who has already acquired them from someone else: a nation acquires them by what medical men would call auto-intoxication, or, it may be, by the influence of another nation on its borders: and

once they have got a hold in practice all our powers of sophistry are invoked to prove that they are sound in principle.

Although the cake of custom is hard to break, at times it is broken by the exertions of some leader endowed with exceptional force. A new cake however is always waiting to be formed.

> "To the majority in every age," writes Sir John Seeley, "that is to the superficial and the feeble . . . originality is alarming, perplexing, fatiguing. They unite to crush the innovator. But it may be that by his own energy and by the assistance of his followers he proves too strong for them. Gradually about the close of his career, or it may be after it, they are compelled to withdraw their opposition and to imitate the man whom they had denounced. They are compelled to do that which is most frightful to them, to abandon their routine. And then there occurs to them a thought which brings inexpressible relief. Out of the example of the original man they can make a new routine. They may imitate him in everything except his originality. For one routine is as easy to pace as another. What they dread is the necessity of originating, the fatigue of being really alive. And thus the second half of the original man's destiny is really worse than the first, and his failure is written more legibly in the blind veneration of succeeding ages than in the blind hostility of his own. He broke the chains by which men were bound: he threw open to them the doors leading into the boundless freedom of nature and truth. But in the next generation he is idolized and nature and truth as much

> forgotten as ever: if he could return to earth he would find that the crowbars and files with which he made his way out of the prison house have been forged into the bolts and chains of a new prison called by his own name. And who are those who idolize his memory? . . . Precisely the same party which resisted his reform: those who are born for routine and can accommodate themselves to everything but freedom, those who in clinging to the wisdom of the past suppose they love wisdom but in fact love only the past and love the past only because they hate the living present . . . who appeal to the God of the dead against the God of the living." [1]

It seems then that the thing which we call public opinion and which we try to think of as the fruit of a ripe collective reflection on the concerns of common interest and importance is a strange composite, containing ingredients from many quarters. Of these ingredients reason is only one, and it is far from being the most conspicuous. But owing to the strange perversity of our psychological reflection, we tend to twist all the other ingredients into forms of this one in disguise. Ever since we were told on high authority that man is the rational animal we will have it that everything that man does is a manifestation more or less cryptic of his rationality. Among English writers Mr. Balfour in his "Foundations of Belief," and Cardinal Newman in his "Grammar of Assent," have done some excellent pioneer work in forcing our dogmatic psychologists to come to at least a nodding acquaintance with the facts. And anyone who does so is bound to see that it is neither reason pure nor reason diluted, neither

[1] "Ecce Homo," pp. 252, 253.

reason under its own name, nor reason under an alias, but feeling, instinct, suggestibility, sympathy, imitativeness that have shaped many of those convictions for which we cast about on challenge to find theoretical justification. Mr. Balfour writes with his characteristic vigour:

> "To reject all convictions which are not the result of free speculative investigation is fortunately an exercise of which humanity is in the strictest sense incapable. Some societies and some individuals may show more inclination to indulge in it than others. But in no condition of society and in no individual will the inclination be more than very partially satisfied. Always and everywhere our imaginary observer contemplating from some external coign of vantage the course of human history would notice the immense, the inevitable and on the whole the beneficent part which Authority plays in the production of belief." [1]

Ladies and gentlemen, is there any clear or significant moral to be drawn from the facts that I have been emphasizing? The title which I have given to this paper suggests that the drawing of morals is not just now our business. I proposed to consider public opinion not ethically but psychologically: that is I proposed to inquire how the thing actually grows up, not how it should be operated upon in any human interest whatsoever. But if what I have been saying is true there is clearly a moral latent in it: may I throw out one or two suggestions as to the direction in which it lies?

As persons who look forward to and who try in some feeble degree to further the social advance

[1] "Foundations of Belief," p. 200.

of our age we are constantly confronted with what is called the *spirit of the time*. In the light of our analysis we shall not if we are wise be either unduly impressed by or unduly reverential towards the thing which this phrase denotes. We must indeed understand it: but I suggest to you that the better we understand the sources in which it takes its rise the smaller respect we shall frequently be disposed to pay to it. Once we have seen inside that great social laboratory where public opinion is being manufactured, once we observe what manner of ingredients they are that coalesce together into the finished product, public opinion will be one of the last things before which we shall feel like prostrating ourselves. We have seen it originate in sources that are anything and everything except either intelligence or reason: we have seen how prejudice begets prejudice and passion begets passion, how the cake of custom hardens, how blind imitativeness gives birth to a tradition which it is impossible to shake and dangerous even to dispute. There is no tyranny like the tyranny of the Zeitgeist. How many great upward movements of the race have been initiated by men who were the obstinate antagonists rather than the docile followers of the spirit of their age? If there had been none who were in advance of their generation, none as we sometimes put it 'born out of due time' the world would have no nerve of progress: but every such man is in conflict with his environment, in conflict with authority, in conflict one might say with the very social atmosphere he breathes. You remember the great passage in which the writer to the Hebrews calls the hero-roll of his nation and immortalizes in turn its judges, its lawgivers, its prophets. Is there a name in the series that does not stand for

opposition rather than for subservience to the spirit of the time, a name which does not symbolize the originality that creates circumstance rather than the submissiveness that follows in its train? At all events it seemed to the writer that the heroes who had made his country had been in a singular degree at variance with their own generation: to him consonance with the temper of one's age was anything but a sign of what Carlyle calls the spirit that strives in the inward parts of great men. They were, he says, persecuted, afflicted, tormented: of them the world was not worthy. There is a class of whom the world is always worthy and more than worthy: it is worthy of those who watch for, reproduce, exaggerate its foibles, who make themselves the very embodiment of its ruling passions, who shriek its catch words, encourage its illusions, and flatter its fanaticisms. But it is a poor *rôle* to play and it never has been played by the men whose names stand for epochs in the march of history.

The second moral to which I draw your attention may seem a reactionary paradox but it is to my mind plainly indicated by facts. It is that we must greatly moderate the sanguine hopes that we tend to indulge about what is called the "education of the race." We speak floridly about reason coming to its own, about the mists of prejudice being dispelled by the light of knowledge, about the growth of an instructed and illumined democracy. John Locke once repudiated the view that God had made man a featherless biped and left it to Aristotle to make him rational. We might well commiserate Aristotle or anyone else upon setting his hand to such a task. These are the instincts and impulses with which we have been equipped: and to alter human nature is a large

order. While the earth remains men in the mass will never be moved by reason in anything like the same degree in which they will be moved by feeling, by sympathy, by suggestion, by imitativeness. A crowd, a great city, a nation will never reason collectively: and he who sets out to make them do so and who relies for social regeneration upon their becoming able and ready to do so has many disappointments in store for him. Those who see evidence that such a thing can be done see it only at times when the crowd or the city or the nation endorse their own particular schemes and cannot see it at all when the schemes of their opponents become popular. Reasoning will always be the occupation of the minority: the majority must always be led. And I am optimistic enough to think that on the whole this is very much for the best. An impious scientist once claimed that if he had been consulted when the human eye was originally framed he could have made some valuable suggestions: and not a few persons could easily improve upon human nature. I think a world of pure reasoners would not be a better world but a worse: rationally stronger it would be emotionally intolerable: and we have good ground to rejoice that the alleged mission of Aristotle is as impossible as it would be undesirable.

V

PRAGMATISM

"Intellectus humanus luminis sicci non est; sed recipit infusionem a voluntate et affectibus, id quod generat *ad quod vult scientias*: quod enim mavult homo verum esse id potius credit. Reiicit itaque difficilia, ob inquirendi impatientiam; sobria quia coarctant spem; altiora naturae propter superstitionem; lumen experientiae, propter arrogantiam et fastum, ne videatur mens versari in vilibus et fluxis; paradoxa propter opinionem vulgi; denique innumeris modis, iisque interdum imperceptibus, affectus intellectum imbuit et inficit."

BACON: NOV. ORG.

IT is not, I think, inappropriate to introduce a short study of the doctrine known as Pragmatism in a series of essays on psychological subjects. At all events whoever else may object I shall have the hearty approval of the pragmatists themselves, for the view which is thus implied regarding the nature of their system is not only one which they admit but one on which they insist. And it seems both quite natural and quite justifiable that they should. Pragmatism is indeed, primarily, a theory of knowledge, and it already threatens to pass into a general metaphysic: but it has come to us from men whose minds were steeped in psychological ways of thinking, it advances a certain claim—be it right or wrong—regarding the relevance of psychology to the solution of the world problem, and it fairly bristles with subsidiary questions which only psychologists can effectively discuss.

It was some time before the philosophers of note made up their minds that pragmatism must be taken seriously. At first sight it is indeed paradoxical enough, and, as Mr. Alfred Sidgwick complains, one effort after another was made to represent it as "mere foolishness." It has survived those attempts; it is still militant and aggressive; and, while dissenting from what I take to be the central position of the school, I am bound to say that its survival and its prosperity seem to me to be due simply to those elements of neglected and yet important truth which the theory contains. And I admit that not a few of the criticisms to which the leaders have been subjected have been profoundly irrelevant. The onslaughts on Pragmatism, desperately vicious as they have been, have often been onslaughts on something which *might* have been said but which so far as we can discover never *has* been said by anyone. The zeal of the critics has, in many cases, not been a zeal according to knowledge. Opinions incredibly fatuous are freely attributed both to the late Professor James and to Dr. Schiller, and pages of argument have been devoted to exposing fallacies which if they had really been committed by these writers would have made it impossible for any intelligent person to waste his time in reading their books. But these savage blows have been aimed at an enemy that was not there. As in the Spanish Armada the artillery has been immense but the gunners' practice has been poor and the shots have sailed magnificently over the enemy's head.

On the other hand the pragmatists have been the most elusive of philosophers. Their theory seems to have as many forms as there are types of critic: it is moreover dexterous enough to present to each critic

in turn just that form of itself to which his particular criticisms are *not* relevant. And it has not only many forms, it has also degrees, in the same sense in which it attributes degrees to truth. A man may be more or less a pragmatist—they will even accept, *faute de mieux* a "tendency of mind" without any definite statement whatever. And if any one has said anything which resembles something that pragmatists in common with many others have also said they are always ready to claim him either as a fully-fledged convert or as a highly promising beginner.

We cannot hope to follow pragmatism through all its bewildering varieties; but two main types must be sharply distinguished. According to the first the practical usefulness of believing a proposition is the test, or at least one indispensable test, of the truth of that proposition: according to the second the practical usefulness of believing it is *identical* with its truth. These are plainly very different. It is one thing to say that if I wish to know whether a judgment is true I must not neglect to consider what results follow in practice from assuming it to be true and what from assuming it to be false. He who apprehends facts as they really are may naturally be expected to fare better in action than he who labours under errors and illusions: conversely, practical success may be held to indicate that one is on the right theoretical track. A mathematician will be astonished to hear that he must forecast consequences before deciding whether two sides of a triangle are or are not together greater than the third; still, even though we argue that in some sense or other he must do so, the ideal of truth may remain as that of correspondence between notions in my mind and facts outside my mind; the theory merely propounds a special method by which such

correspondence is ascertained. But it is quite another thing to say that in believing a proposition to be true I mean, or ought to mean, nothing else than that I believe it to be the most practically serviceable assumption upon which I can proceed. This expressly disclaims any reference to correctness of theory at all. Truth ceases to be harmony between my ideas on the one side and outer fact on the other: it becomes simply a quality of the ideas themselves. An illustration may make this clearer.

"Every mass attracts every other mass with a force that varies directly with the product of the masses and inversely with the square of the distance between them." When we call this proposition "true" what, if we are pragmatists, do we mean?

If we belong to the milder wing of the school we mean what common sense means, viz. that movements of bodies in the material world take place in a fashion of which this formula is a correct report. It is not in the *interpretation* but in the *justification* of the formula that our pragmatism reveals itself. If pressed to say *why* we believe in the law of gravitation we should reply that the law is evidenced proximately by certain physical calculations, but that if our questioner is seeking for the basis of physics itself we must refer him in the end to certain postulates which cannot in strictness of language be justified intellectually at all. That is they cannot be proved in such a way that he who denies or doubts them can be convicted of self-contradiction. They are not necessities of thought and even if they were they might still be challenged on the ground that a necessity of thought need not have corresponding to it a necessary relation of things, for who knows whether the microcosm and the macrocosm are framed in harmony?

They all alike depend upon the principle of the "Uniformity of Nature" and our reason for believing in this is that unless nature were uniform life would be impossible. Thus among the considerations that vindicate any belief whatever we should claim that a place be conceded to considerations that are not intellectual but practical.

If however we are pragmatists of the more drastic type we are bound to say far more than this. We must claim that the truth of the law of gravitation is not merely evidenced but constituted by its usefulness: consequently that it contains no statement of fact about the outer world at all. It becomes merely an affirmation that he who acts as if mass attracted mass in the way indicated will succeed better in securing the interests of life than he who acts on any other assumption.

To the reader who is unfamiliar with the literature of this subject it will probably seem that the second of these positions is only slightly more absurd than the first. I ask him however to hold his judgment for a little in reserve until the argument has been developed. The distinction between the two positions is, moreover, far from trivial. In that more radical form which is beginning to be separated from the other under the title "Humanism," the theory is manifestly agnostic. I cannot imagine how disbelief in the possibility of knowledge could express itself in terms more unambiguous; for the very ideal of truth is represented as a quest which was from the outset not only hopeless but meaningless.

We have not, of course, *eo ipso* disproved a theory by showing it to end in agnosticism. But we have at least discounted any initial plea in its favour which urges it as an alternative to the despair of knowledge.

And Humanism though it so often thus advertises itself is nothing but a new despair, and a despair whose roots are more deeply placed in the psychology of our nature than those of many an agnosticism that has preceded. We may say for example with G. H. Lewes that the failure of system after system to read the riddle of the universe must generate in the mind so profound a discouragement that he who learns from experience will distrust all future attempts. The History of Philosophy may be thought of as a wet blanket upon all philosophical enterprise. But while there is life there is hope: and some bold thinker who justifies himself by his success might escape even from the suffocation of Positivism. On the other hand if we have become disillusioned not merely as to this or that system which claims to be true but as to the very notion of truth itself then no system that anyone can offer us will seem other than an idle tale. Desperate remedies may cure even desperate diseases but you cannot reanimate a corpse.

For the present I put on one side the more violent of the pragmatists to consider the less violent. If we see ground for rejecting the less we shall not be much troubled by the greater. The question before us is this: how far does the consideration of the practical usefulness of believing a proposition give legitimate ground to a reasonable man for believing it?

I

Let me first draw out at some length the answer of Intellectualism. It will throw much light on the situation if we review briefly the phases through which that answer has passed.

Truth, according to the writers of this School, is a

function of the intellect alone. So far as we speak of it as "satisfying" it is satisfaction to the Reason that we have in view. To believe a thing either because we want to believe it or because it gives us pleasure to believe it is, scientifically speaking, the sin of sins. In that intellectual edifice which we call truth whatever comes from any other source than intellect is an intruder and a corrupter.

For, to begin with, it is the function of reason to overcome the deceptiveness of sense. Reason proceeds by the canon that what is real must be self-consistent, and the world as it discloses itself in the uncriticized testimony of sensation is at once seen to be self-contradictory. The feelings vary indefinitely between man and man, and even in the same man at different times. We get different reports of one and the same object according to differences in the sensibility of the observer. We cannot tell with any degree of precision whether water is hot or cold by simply putting our hands into it, for the result is modified by the temperature of the hands themselves. Consequently we use a thermometer. Every appeal to scientific standards to correct the variations of individual sense is a particular case of the same general principle.

The question whether there is any court of appeal which can sit in judgment upon our reason has already been raised and settled once for all. We owe the raising of it to Kant and the settling of it to Hegel.

Kant's question was not "What do we know?" but rather "How can we know?" and "How far can we know?" He looked on the human mind as an instrument comparable to the microscope or the telescope through which the universe is examined: and he drew the inference that just as every competent scientist before turning his instrument on his

material inspects the instrument itself to find out and allow for its limitations and its imperfections so the philosopher will do well to be first an epistemologist: he must study the mind itself, must find out how it proceeds in the act of knowing, test its possible range, and so save himself from error on the one hand and from hopeless enterprises on the other. If he omit this it may easily turn out that he has overlooked the subjective factor or that he has been trying to discover things which the mind from its very nature can never know. This scheme of testing the intellect's capacity was attempted on a magnificent scale in the Critique of Pure Reason. But Hegel has shown us that the attempt was improper. You can test a deficient instrument and find out how far it is deficient only if you have a standard instrument with which to compare it or at least some norm other than itself by which its shortcomings may be indicated. But in theory of knowledge we have not and we cannot have anything of the kind. We cannot compare the world as known with the world as it is in itself; for *ex hypothesi* we have no information of the nature of anything except in so far as that thing is mirrored in thought. The *Ding an sich* was quickly dismissed as sterile and self-contradictory both for theory and for practice. What we needed to substitute for it is the doctrine of an *immanent* criticism. Knowledge is not to be authenticated by the witness of any reality which is outside knowledge; its validity is guaranteed only by the perfection of its internal coherence, by its ability to unite all the fragments of experience in a systematic and consistent whole: knowledge is a fabric which "stands through the equilibration of its own elements."[1]

[1] Sir Henry Jones, "Idealism as a Practical Creed," p. 296.

Criticism thus re-interpreted may, according to the intellectualists, proceed apace. As it advances the structure of truth gradually discloses itself in ampler proportions. But the instrument is no longer a *psychological* criticism. The question of the origin of knowledge must be buried once for all. Our business is the perfecting of truth, and we must no more be led aside into the quest after the route by which the mind reached its present ways of thinking than the geometer will drop his investigations in order to write a history of geometrical ideas. Whether the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are or are not equal is to be discovered, not by any appeal to the past, but by a process of logical articulation which is independent of time. To trace his science from its rude beginnings to its present elaboration has indeed an interest; but it is of an archaeological type, it leaves validity wholly unaffected. Similarly to the metaphysician truth must be a matter of logic never a matter of psychology.

What then is our criterion by which in the end we test the claim of any proposition to be considered true? It is certainly not the criterion of our own likes and dislikes. We cannot believe just what we choose. The one test is this: will the new proposition enter into systematic connexion with the rest of our experience so as to constitute one rational and intelligible whole?

The pragmatists are in the habit of speaking of Plato as the father of Intellectualism, and they have excellent grounds for doing so, for this way of stating the ideal of truth is clearly foreshadowed in the sixth book of the *Republic*. In a passage which has been the despair of Platonic scholars it is explained that

the Ideas stand in a hierarchy held together under the great architectonic Idea of the Good which is related to them as the Sun to the Earth and to all living things thereon. One commentator is sure that by this Plato must have meant God, for how else can we understand "the source alike of being and of knowing"? A second takes refuge in that resort of a lazy or visionless critic—I mean the view that "Plato after all was a poet and an artist rather than a systematic thinker, and this passage must not be pressed." A third with a slavery to the letter which no scribe ever surpassed fastens on the word Good rather than the word Idea, and announces that here the moral enthusiasm of Plato bursts the bonds of his own "crazy metaphysic" and that he is declaring his faith in an ethical interpretation of the universe.

May I suggest that if Plato had meant God he would have said God, that we generally get on better in interpreting him if we assume that he had some intelligible meaning in the words he used, and that it is singular to regard him as breaking the bonds of his system in that very passage where he himself clearly believed that his system found its logical culmination?

In all but in name this passage of the Republic is a discussion of the criterion of truth. Plato had already insisted that the world with which science deals is not the world of chaotic sense-experience; objects as given to sense must be arranged under concepts, or as he called them "Ideas." Each particular science operates with a particular sort of ideas, and each boldly assumes certain axiomatic principles of its own. Those axioms it is not the business of the special scientist to examine: he takes them for granted, uses his ὑποθέσεις as if they were ἀρχαί. Geometry stands or falls with the axioms regarding

space; but it is no part of the geometer's task to inquire after the fashion of Herbert Spencer what were the circumstances in the evolution of mind which have imparted to those axioms their present coercive power over human intelligence. Nevertheless it is somebody's business to investigate such a question. When the special sciences have done their work that work must be reviewed from a more ultimate standpoint. That which was to the scientist an axiom to be received becomes to the metaphysician an hypothesis to be considered, and, it may be, when considered as an expression of the ultimate nature of things, *not* to be believed. The test as to whether these hypotheses are to stand or to fall is for Plato simply their ability to agree among themselves.

In his view the process of arriving at truth seems to me to resemble nothing so much as a child's manipulation of a box of bricks. If you watch each cube taken up, looked at on its various faces and put tentatively into a certain position where it has a *primâ facie* continuity of pattern with its neighbour, you have an image of one of the special sciences advancing by way of a working hypothesis: the child thinks his adjustment is probably right, but he holds this opinion with a certain reserve; he cannot be sure until he has seen the whole pattern. If there is a jarring element anywhere the entire box may have to be rearranged. If it should turn out at the end that one solitary cube has no place left for it at all—even though the rest seem to form a coherent system without it—there is something wrong with the disposition he has made. Or, to vary the illustration, if one takes a bicycle to pieces and sets it up again with apparent success but is left with even one bolt or screw in his hands for which he can find no place,

he will probably discover if he is rash enough to mount the machine that the systematic unity of the whole needs every one of them. The ὑποθέσεις on which his adjustments were made would be discredited for the ἰδέα τἀγαθοῦ would not come out right at the end. Thus every judgment that comes to us with a claim to be called "true" may be regarded as a candidate for admission into a system. When it makes its appearance it does not find the mind entirely empty, except in the hypnotized patient, and there as is well known every such claimant is at once made welcome and approved. In normal waking life the candidate proposition finds the field already occupied by a system of beliefs: and very frequently, however good its own credentials may be, if it cannot square with that pre-existing system it is summarily rejected. It is like the application of a person for admission to a club whose basis is such that his membership would contradict it. One of two things must happen; the basis must be altered or the application be refused. In the case of the candidate proposition if the system of pre-existing beliefs that it encounters is strong enough to prevent the newcomer from obtaining a hearing we have an example of dogmatic prejudice. Where on the other hand the system yields at the first assault of every specious and plausible suggestion stability of knowledge will never be attained.

This however is as far as our club illustration can be pressed. For there is a cardinal difference that we must notice. Not everyone need belong to the club but every genuine experience must have room made for it in the system of knowledge. And it was a master stroke of the genius of Plato to suggest the very principle which was launched twenty-two centuries later by Hegel that there is only one system

for construing reality which can find a place for every fragment of experience and consequently that the criterion of truth is consistency provided consistency be interpreted in the widest possible sense. That there is such a thing as consistent falsehood is obvious: but the artist in lying remains undetected only so long as we deal with a limited area of inquiry, only so long as we take a great deal for granted.

II

Such then in broad outline is that account of truth to which the pragmatists have given the name "Intellectualism." Against it they have various objections to urge. In this section I shall try to state their case as forcibly as I can reserving criticism until later.

(*a*) In the first place it is objected that intellectualism rests upon a false psychology. It assumes an activity of "pure thinking" without any admixture of emotional or volitional process.

But no such psychical activity is possible:

> "There is no pure intellect. If 'pure intellect' does not imply a gross blunder in psychology and this is probably what it too often meant until the conception was challenged, it means an abstraction, an intellect conceived as void of function, as not applied to any actual problem, as satisfying no purpose. And such an intellect of course would be absurd." [1]

That is, wherever and whenever we think we must also feel and will: we are psychologically incapable of thinking in "purity." These are distinguishable aspects not separable parts of a concrete act. More than this

[1] F. C. S. Schiller, "Studies in Humanism," p. 7.

—a real primacy belongs not to the intellectual but rather to the non-intellectual side. For my "experience" is not anything and everything that happens to me: it is not the sum-total of those impressions that I am receiving from my sense organs. "My experience is that which I agree to attend to." And why do I agree to attend to some things and not to others? Just because some things are and others are not connected with my interests; and my interests are determined by anything rather than by cold passionless thought. They draw their colour, their warmth, in a word their whole moving efficacy from the emotions and the will. Thus Bacon was profoundly right when he coined the aphorism by which this essay is prefaced. He said truly that the light of the intellect is not "dry": but we shall see shortly that he was wrong in supposing that he or anyone else could devise an Organon to make it dry or that it would illumine reality better if it could be so made. Its dependence on non-intellectual process is a permanent feature in its constitution so that one might almost speak of the will as supreme and of the reason as a servant more or less faithful in carrying out its behests.

Thus to those who understand the intimacy with which the different modes of conscious experience are interwoven in a concrete psychic act it will seem *primâ facie* extremely probable that they will disturb each other at every point. Have we evidence that this disturbance is not only probable and common but actual and necessary?

(*b*) The strongest proof that the disturbance is actual is to be found, according to the pragmatists, in the break-down of one attempt after another to make intellectual constructions consistent and coherent: and the strongest proof that it is necessary is the failure

of recent efforts to state in intellectual terms what is meant by "truth" itself.

No philosopher, whatever his school, can look without a measure of discouragement upon the sterility of his own studies when compared with the fruitfulness of the special sciences. It is painful to think that while physicist, chemist and biologist have been co-operating to build up a common fabric of knowledge in their several departments, philosophers are still at pains chiefly to show how muddleheaded other philosophers have been. The differences are by no means limited to matters of detail: even the most fundamental principles of ethical, of metaphysical, of epistemological theory are still matters of opinion. And the acuteness with which this discredit is felt by philosophers themselves is witnessed by their admission that their science is valuable mainly as an intellectual gymnasium, and again by their insistence that genuine progress has been made in our understanding of the questions to be asked if not of the answers to be given.

When one faces the problem of accounting for this manifold discrepancy he becomes at once gravely embarrassed. The agnostic solution is plain and intelligible. It replies that antinomies are inevitable wherever the limits of possible knowledge are transgressed: men cannot fail to contradict each other when they are all alike pressing for an answer to questions that are inherently insoluble. Every answer must be invalid, and as one invalidity is as good as another a free field is given to peculiarities of temperament. But Agnosticism is not Intellectualism: and the man who affirms the competence of reason to solve the world-problem, may well be challenged to say why so many reasoners of equal

competence and equal sincerity from Plato to M. Henri Bergson have been quarrelling for thousands of years, why propositions that seem to one set of them obviously true seem to another set obviously false, why the dispute seems to be widening in one direction as fast as it is narrowing in another, and, most wonderful of all, why faith in the efficacy of reason remains unshaken by its repeated deceptions and collapses. Pragmatism finds a moral in all this: it concludes that pure reason is calumniated when it is spoken of as giving in the mind of Mr. Bradley a result contradictory to the result it gives in the mind of William James. It boldly acknowledges that a man's philosophy is determined and must always be determined by non-intellectual factors as well, so that such contrasts are rather to be expected than to be wondered at. What moral has intellectualism to draw?

Of recent years intellectualists have taken home to themselves the urgency of this situation. Distracted by their failures to agree on the substantial content of truth they have asked themselves what it is that they *mean* by truth. And this has led them to ask the complementary question: "What is Error?" It is significant that it is this latter problem which seems to that school at present particularly urgent.

"It is extremely difficult," writes Mr. A. D. Lindsay, "to explain how we can make mistakes in mathematics though we quite certainly do."[1] Pragmatism replies that it is not only difficult, it is impossible so long as one thinks of pure reason as working independently. Just because it is pure it must be free from the possibility of error. And pragmatists cannot but see evidence of the unreality of our epistemological theories in the fact that the very

[1] "The Philosophy of Bergson," p. 202.

commonest experience we have is turned by such theories into a mystery which no man can explain. They are reminded of those ethical speculations which involved the impossibility of wrong-doing and made an enigma out of "unreasonable action."

If on the other hand we give up the idea of "apodeictic certainties" and of "cold clear light," recognizing that in concrete material at all events there can never be apodicity, and that the light is always suffused by emotion and temperament, not lapses into error but ascertainment of truth becomes the real difficulty to be interpreted. And the clue lies in verification by consequences. Such consequences are to be understood as satisfactions of every kind intellectual, emotional, volitional, corresponding to the various kinds of impulse which give birth to an hypothesis. Truth thus admits of degrees: for the satisfactions may rise from the allaying of a transient need to the gratifying of a fundamental postulate.

(*c*) A further objection brought against Intellectualism is that it completely misunderstands the relation between the "concept" and the "thing."

That the nature of Reality is disclosed not in immediate sense-experience, but in the scientific arrangement of that experience under concepts and laws has been regarded as indisputable since the time of Plato. We do not for example "know" flowers or animal forms by merely looking at them: it is the botanist and the zoologist who know: for knowledge means above all system, and sense-impressions so long as they remain mere sense-impressions give only a chaos. The first scientific step is to put the things together that belong together, and to stereotype each homogeneous group under a "concept."

The crucial question is, in what sense can the things be said to "belong together"? To this question the intellectualist answer is still, however it may disguise itself under new forms of expression, just Plato's answer in his "Theory of Ideas." That which we call in logic the 'concept' has corresponding to it a real "common nature" in the things themselves. The general idea is a mental replica of something that exists *in rerum natura*. The universe presents real articulations to thought as surely as the human body presents real articulations to the anatomist, or as the marble has 'natural veins that prefigure the coming statue.' If thought is going to be true it must discover and follow the line of this definite, this eternally fixed system of connexions. Consequently there can be only one correct system of concepts, that namely which reproduces the organization of things.

The mathematician is thus in very truth "thinking the thoughts of God after Him" for "God geometrizes." What is this but a modern dressing of that picture which Plato gives us in the *Timaeus*, of a divine artificer moulding the primitive ὕλη after the pattern of eternal Ideas and of the finite intelligence struggling through δόξα and διάνοια to reach the conceptual system that resided from the beginning in the mind of God?

But criticism, especially in our time the criticism of M. Bergson, has shattered this picture beyond repair.

The concept simply cannot be a faithful copy or anything like a faithful copy of the thing. For that which stands still can be no photograph of that which moves. And it is of the essence of the concept to be static while it is of the essence of reality to be kinetic.

Would not Plato have been nearer the truth if he had simply inverted his argument? The real he says is contrasted with the apparent by its *permanence:* ought he not rather to have said with Heracleitos that only an artificial construction of the mind remains permanent, while the living reality changes every moment? By no possibility can that change be mirrored in thought and the sooner we give up the notion of mirroring as the way in which thought refers to things the better for our philosophic insight.

The most successful attempt that has yet been made to depict motion by complicating in an extreme degree non-moving factors, or in other words to find among the dead a plausible simulation of the living is in the cinematograph. M. Bergson has shown that here lies a perfect analogue of the process of thinking. It is worth while to quote the famous paragraph from "L'Evolution Creatrice."

> "Suppose that we wish to portray on a screen a moving scene, such as the march past of a regiment. One way of doing it would be to cut out jointed figures representing the soldiers, to impress upon each of them the movement of marching, a movement varying from individual to individual but common to the human kind, and then to throw the whole on the screen. The little game would require an immense amount of troublesome work and yield a very indifferent result. How could it at its best reproduce the suppleness and variety of life? There is a second way, much easier and more effective. That is to take a series of snapshots of the regiment as it passes, and then throw these photographs on the screen so that they rapidly follow one another. This is what the

cinematograph does. It reconstitutes the mobility of the marching regiment by means of photographs, each of which represents it motionless." [1]

What the cinematograph can do to represent a moving regiment that and nothing more thought can do to represent a moving universe.

To put the same thing in another way—the copy theory in every form really ignores the significance of *time*.

Now there are sciences which can afford to be indifferent to time. The relations investigated in Pure Mathematics are eternal relations: that the general equation of the second degree represents a conic and nothing but a conic is true to-day in the same sense and with the same necessity as when it was first discovered or for that matter long before it had been discovered. For the relation here asserted is a relation not between living things but between abstract concepts: and just because they are abstract concepts, just because they are not living but dead, they never change. There are other types of science however as well as Pure Mathematics: and it is the attempt to force the methods of these other sciences to conform to the mathematical pattern which has led to untold confusion. Determinism we are told is implicit in science. Why? Because it is demanded by the Law of Causation. And the Law of Causation is represented as affirming not only that every event has a cause but that the whole situation at any moment was implicitly present all along to those who had eyes to see. Now the whole system of relations that makes up the theory of Conic Sections is in a

[1] "L'Évolution Creatrice," pp. 329, 330 (translated by Mr. Wildon Carr, *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. IX. p. 44).

sense implicitly present to him that can discern it once he knows what the sections of the cone are. He needs no experience: if Archimedes could rise from the grave the whole thing could be demonstrated to him from first principles which he could understand without the slightest reference to any events that have happened in the world since his death. But will any one say that the whole course of the evolution of life was implicit in the same way at every stage of that evolution? that if a section had been cut across it the future would have been naked and open in all its wealth of detail to any one who had the penetration to discern it?

M. Bergson is protesting that there is no sense whatever in which the whole future of a living being is involved in its present state, and that the determinists have been misled by mathematical analogies. They have identified the relation of cause and effect with the relation of Ground and Consequent: assuming that time makes as little difference in the sciences of life as in the sciences of abstract dimensions. The only possible issue of such determinism would be to say for example that the whole social and moral progress of the human race was implicitly present in that molten mass which scientists tell us constituted our earth at the stage when the heat was too intense to allow the presence of life. To this the advocates of what is called "freewill" have all along turned deaf ears amid a chorus of scientific ridicule. M. Bergson has been showing us that the common sense of mankind was right and that the mind of the scientist was confused by mathematical obsessions.

Thus evolution is properly called "creative": that which is *evolved* was *not first involved* in the sense in which the properties of the circle are implied

in its definition. Life is more than logic and it cannot be imprisoned in logical categories.

(*d*) What then is the conception of truth which pragmatism has to offer?

It conceives man as an evolving being placed in an environment to which he must accommodate himself if he is to survive and to succeed. His first necessity is not thought but behaviour. Unless he adapts his conduct to his situation he may at any moment be swept away by one of those great natural forces to which human well-being seems to be a matter of no importance. If he sits down in the way that intellectualism supposes to *study* the world, intending to make his behaviour a sort of corollary from his thought, he will not be long here for there is no time for such intellectual preparations. He must act first and think afterwards. Moreover he does not in the least know to begin with whether thought can serve him: for he has no guarantee of the rationality of the universe: the microcosm and the macrocosm may not be framed in harmony. Happily man is so made that he never runs those enormous risks that intellectualism would advise. He is equipped with ready-made instincts, impulses to act in certain ways amid certain situations and he acts he knows not why. On the whole his instincts serve him. Later on he begins to reflect: "reasoning" is gradually evolved, and like everything else without exception that is evolved, it is produced as a weapon or auxiliary to help man to fight his battle with circumstance. Thus intellect is in its origin the servant of action and this character it ought never to lose. If it is going to help him to any effect he must make what the philosophers call the 'baseless assumption' that the world is rational. He boldly makes this

"leap in the dark" just as at the first he put his trust in instinct and he is rewarded by success. The notion of the rationality of things is a notion that 'works' just as the instincts and the non-rational impulses formerly 'worked.' If his neighbour beside him refuses to make this venture of faith that neighbour fares worse and if he is persistent in his refusal natural selection in time disposes of him and of all others who are similarly obstinate. Thus the conviction grows that the universe is friendly and that the 'truth' of things is reached by following the path that serves the needs of mankind.

In time however intellect becomes too proud to remember the rock out of which it was hewn. In particular it forgets that it is only one of the instruments which man possesses for dealing with his environment and that its authority is limited by its usefulness. It becomes intolerant of those earlier auxiliaries to which man owed his life before he had time to reason at all: and it begins to decline such humble terms as 'postulation.' It must now be reminded of its past and of the equally important past of the life of impulse, of feeling, and of will. For that great synthesis which we call truth has arisen out of all combined and only by satisfying all of them can it vindicate its title. Nor can it claim yet to be complete just because some of these are still left unaccounted for and unsatisfied. And the attempt of intellect to make good these arrogant pretensions is seen in the struggles of intellectualism to-day to give a consistent account of itself. From these embarrassments we shall never free ourselves until we recognize that truth is no function of a fragmentary human mind but an activity of the whole man; in Dr. Schiller's words it is

'that manipulation of objects which turns out upon trial to be useful, primarily for any human end but ultimately for that perfect harmony of our whole life which forms our final aspiration.'[1]

III

In this section I shall attempt to estimate the force of the pragmatist criticism and to suggest a basis of reconciliation.

Let me first summarize those features in which it seems to me that the leaders of this movement have rendered important service to clear thinking. I do not say that in all the points I am about to specify the pragmatists have been really original: some of their contributions have been made before and made more than once: but they have put these arguments in a new dress and they have applied them at a moment that is singularly opportune.

(*a*) I acknowledge a real service in the *critique of concepts*. It is usual to think of the Common-sense school as the authors of the "Copy" theory of truth and of the Hegelians as the originators of the "Coherence" theory. But the notion of valid thought as a kind of prolonged photography of things is never far away in the teaching of Hegel though it is there inverted into the notion of things as a photography of thought. He believed in an *à priori* necessity in virtue of which the process of the universe must be imaged in the self-unfolding of ideas, and he held that against this necessity it was useless for the historian or for anyone else to contend. If history did not bear this out then history had not yet been discerningly written and it must be re-

[1] "Humanism," p. 61.

written from this point of view. To this theory his successors have been in the main faithful. Though the self-development of the Idea might have been extremely complicated and though it might be worth while to verify more frequently than Hegel had himself done the successive *à priori* stages by appeal to the humbler *à posteriori* voice, they held that in the end the record of the past must harmonize thought and things by making both alike illustrate the 'triple nisus.' This led inevitably to all those difficulties about point-to-point correspondence which Mr. Joachim has so strikingly emphasized.[1]

But no one who had been trained in a psychological school could fail to become impatient of this intellectualization of the thought-process. Even a philosopher who is far from being psychologically-minded—Mr. F. H. Bradley—raised the standard of revolt against the notion of copying when he declared that truth can never be fact and fact can never be truth. He has declined to call himself a Hegelian, but only in the same sense in which he has repudiated all labels, and it will hardly be questioned that in this country the Hegelian way of thinking has found in him a decisive and even an epoch-making culmination. Yet in the last quarter of his "Principles of Logic," Mr. Bradley really separated himself from the central dogma of his school that "the universe contains no power which can permanently resist the pressure of thought." And the ground of his separation was just this, that he saw it to be intrinsically impossible to make the photographic relation between thought and things either faithful or adequate. If I may be permitted a metaphor Hegel bequeathed his famous motto as a legacy to those who should come after

[1] "The Nature of Truth," Chaps. I. and III. *passim*.

him: his representatives have made effort after effort to administer, but their embarrassments grew upon their hands until Mr. Bradley cast the estate into an intellectual Chancery, where, so far as the Hegelians are concerned it has been allowed ever since to remain.

Now the criticism which Mr. Bradley applied from the standpoint of theory of knowledge the pragmatists have applied from the standpoint of psychology, but in the latter it seems to me that we have a principle of progress which we miss in the former.

In the essay called "Appearance and Reality" a critical solvent was employed not merely upon this or that manipulation of concepts but upon the notion of the concept itself. The argument was that conceptual thought proceeds everywhere by the machinery of relations, and that in the relating intelligence artificial construction is necessarily substituted for the concrete truth of things. For example the pair of categories which we use most frequently is that of Substance and Quality or of the Thing and its Attributes. We speak of the qualities *of* an object and we plainly imply that the object is distinct from its qualities: it owns them but it is not identical with them. It is a principle of unity which binds them together, but if you think away from the principle of unity the attributes which that principle connects you have left not the "owner" of the attributes but simply nothing at all. Thus we have to choose between two alternatives, each so long as we abstain from thinking of the other obviously true, and each the moment we begin to think of the other obviously false. The first is this—the thing is distinct from its qualities:—*e.g.*, the orange is not simply roundness, yellowness, softness, etc., added together: and the second is this:—the thing has no existence whatever

apart from its qualities for there is no "orange-in-itself" once we have abstracted from the phenomenal manifestations. Mr. Bradley's inference is that the mode of thinking which proceeds by the categories "substance" and "quality" does not yield us the truth about the Real. It is a convenient and a necessary way of dealing with experience and so long as ultimate truth is not our business it will do no harm. But in the end it is untrue because in the end it is self-contradictory. And the other forms of the relating intelligence when subjected to a similar criticism meet one and all with a similar fate. In Mr. Bradley's picturesque language they are "ruined." The conclusion of his argument is that thought can never mirror reality and to those who have no idea of knowledge except by way of "mirroring" the corollary is obvious.

In all this pragmatists see nothing to quarrel with but rather much to welcome. Especially acceptable to them is Mr. Bradley's idea of the concept as employed for its practical usefulness not for its theoretical accuracy. To this result they have themselves been led by another route. But they dissent from the agnostic deduction because they have seen that knowledge may be valid though it should never be related to its object photographically.

William James had no illusions about the concept of the kind that Mr. Bradley's criticism was needed to dispel because he had come to understand how the concept grew up. He approached it from the standpoint of psycho-genesis. He saw that there is no limit to the variety of conceptual arrangements which we may introduce into our experience; that everyone of them was dictated at the first by some practical need, and that consequently none of them ought ever

to have claimed a fidelity to the original that differed otherwise than in degree from the fidelity of the others. Hence his notion of degrees in truth,—not I think a very happy phrase—though it is Mr. Bradley's as well —but a phrase with a real and an important meaning.

It does not however follow for James as it does seem to follow for Mr. Bradley that the concept being no longer looked upon as a *picture* of the reality cannot impart to us *knowledge* of the reality. It does follow that our knowledge in a concrete material can never be of the kind called "apodeictic." But there is no reason to doubt that it may reach any degree of probability from the stage of mere conjecture to the stage of the "morally certain." One thing however is indispensable and the pragmatists have done well to insist upon it—that at every point we must have recourse to verification by experience.

In other words the pragmatists have helped us to escape the difficulties in which an epistemology like Mr. Bradley's must be entangled, by substituting the idea of a science that advances by provisional hypotheses brought constantly to the touchstone of actual "working" for the idea of a mental process whose stages correspond bit by bit to the processes of nature. The concept of gravitation is not wrought into a receptive mind by a gravitating world outside as the image of the moon is given back by the waters of a lake: at the beginning it was nothing but Newton's happy guess, and if it ever got beyond the position of a guess this was due solely to the fashion in which it attested itself, to the efficiency with which it brought together and held together a mass of *primâ facie* unconnected facts. Is it unreasonable to suppose that as the success of this hypothesis in actual working is more and more profusely illustrated, and as no

contradictory or incompatible cases ever appear no matter how wide the area or how long the period of observation, the hypothesis gains in strength until its probability is for us indistinguishable from a certainty ?

It has often been felt that there is an element of unreality in the philosophical proofs that knowledge is impossible while scientific progress is all the while vindicating itself not in words but in deeds. From the time of Hume such arguments if they admit of no reply produce little genuine conviction. We still feel with Kant that somewhere in the course of the proof—whether we are acute enough to find the spot or are unable to find it—there must be error, for the result is an absurdity. Again under the guidance of Hegel and of those whom he inspired we have come to reject the separation of the sphere of scientific from the sphere of ultimate knowledge. We can no longer believe in the *Ding-an-sich*. But the Hegelian epistemology — while it clung to the belief that the universe is knowable—gave us an account of the way in which it is known that even the Hegelians have recognized to be a foundation, not for faith in but for distrust of the competence of the mind. We needed a new "critical regress" and we have, I think, in a measure got it in the new analysis of the concept.

(*b*) A second service—and that no small one—has been rendered to us by the pragmatists in the vigorous polemic they have conducted against one prevailing fashion in the British Philosophy which immediately preceded them. One may call it "the habit of recognizing difficulties." This sounds a harmless and even an estimable trait of philosophic character. It ought to have made discussion more candid, but it knew no bounds, and as followed by Hegelian writers its effect was commonly to render

discussion absolutely sterile. For when a philosopher of this school has "recognized" a difficulty in his own position and still more when he has said that the inconsistency in question is one which from a higher standpoint we shall one day be able to 'overcome' and to resolve he often seems to suppose that his concern with that particular difficulty is at an end and that he can go on with his system precisely as if nothing had occurred. "I have never been able to understand," said Henry Sidgwick, "how they manage to distinguish those contradictions which they take to be evidence of error from those which they take to be indications of a higher truth."

This peculiarity was conspicuously displayed in epistemological and in ethical controversies, and, if the pragmatists have not dealt with it tenderly we must admit that they have had much provocation. No antinomy was too glaring to be thus disposed of; no enigma created by the Hegelians themselves was too intractable to be postponed until the further standpoint had been reached. In time some of them convinced themselves that our conceptual thinking is invalid and they were likewise sure that in its very invalidities it was 'somehow' the appearance of the Absolute. And they insisted that however finite minds might wrangle about the so-called values of life, about the worth of personality, about moral good and evil, these were after all but illusions of the human point of view: to the Absolute they had no significance. If anyone asked for an explanation in detail as to how the Absolute came so far to forget itself as to beget a world in which such illusions would become so rampant and how in particular certain finite misunderstandings came to exist there was but one reply: "You have touched a difficulty of

the system: somehow these empirical phenomena are self-disclosures of the Real but they do not belong to its ultimate essence." It is scarcely too much to say that Hegelianism in this way engendered a new intellectual vice. That there has been in recent years some very wholesome burning of speculative stubble is due in no small degree to the audacity with which the sacred shibboleths of the dominant school have been profaned. With great plainness of speech both Prof. James and Dr. Schiller have insisted that no higher synthesis shall be held to justify us in saying two contradictory things at the same time, and every reader of the philosophical literature of which I am speaking knows how sorely the admonition was required.

(*c*) The pragmatists have impressed upon us that we must bring our accumulating knowledge of the psychology of cognition into relation with our epistemology and our metaphysics.

The bearing of these sciences upon one another is a thorny question by which philosophy has been often troubled: and it would be idle to pretend that the pragmatists have done anything more than to force us to re-open it. They have done so however just at that opportune moment when the question had been prematurely closed.

It is usual to point out that knowledge may be looked at in two ways corresponding to the two senses of the word "Idea." We may mean by idea a particular concrete state of knowing in the mind of an individual—a state coloured through and through by the knower's individuality. So long as it is thus regarded no question can arise as to the rightness or wrongness, the truth or falsity, of the idea. As a psychic state it simply *is*. We may write its history,

we may lay down the conditions which have given to it its specific character, but we pass to a different point of view when we ask "Is the idea valid? Does it hold good concerning the real world outside?" Here the individual standpoint has been left behind and the universal standpoint has been assumed. Intellectualism insists that our study of ideas in the first sense has no bearing whatever upon our evaluation of ideas in the second. The problem of origin is wholly separate from the problem of validity. Some philosophers do not hesitate even to say that empirical psychology has no more relevance to epistemological puzzles than has the study of magnetism or of electricity.

This is surely arrant dogmatizing. How can the accumulation of empirical facts about the knowing process be without significance for our judgment on the validity of that process? At all events how can any one be sure of this want of significance beforehand?

Take for example our idea of causality. Can we say that what we ought to mean by this word now is in no way determined by the mode in which the idea originated or the process by which it has developed? If it can be shown that in the infancy of the race and in the infancy of the individual one begins to know cause solely through his experiences of personal effort, through awareness of his own power to effect changes on the outside world, is this epistemologically irrelevant? May it not turn out that under the manifold disguises of language it is in some such meaning alone that the scientist of to-day has really the right to employ it and that unwittingly he actually does employ it—a meaning which refers everywhere in the end to volitional activity? At all events is not such a possibility as this always worth considering?

How often has the study of the primitive form of a concept given us the clue by which its later perplexities have been disentangled? I am not now pleading for any particular theory, regarding either cause or any other controversial subject, which particular psychologists may have maintained. I am urging merely that the field should be kept open, and that light should be welcomed from every quarter. The history of philosophy is strewn thick with the blunders of those who have excluded empirical evidence on the strength of some *à priori* assurance that such evidence can be of no avail. And certainly in these days we are not so sure of our doctrine of cognition that we can afford to be contemptuous of anyone who has genuine facts to reveal. I think it is a merit in the pragmatists to have brought the theory of knowledge into closer relation with the psychology of reasoning, though I grant that they have been premature and rash in defining the precise way in which the two studies are related.

While however the movement has these elements of value one must remember that it was not for the sake of emphasizing these that Pragmatism was initiated. It must be finally judged not by its incidental or subordinate accompaniments but by its central position. And, whatever else may as a sort of *πάρεργον* be either proved or disproved, the movement exists to enforce one thesis, viz. that truth is not a purely intellectual ideal and that it is to be recognized by other than intellectual tests. This view has no real justification in the evidence that has been adduced.

(*a*) One may freely grant that "pure thought" is an impossible process if by pure thought is meant thought that is not emotionally toned. One may

also grant that our emotional and volitional nature exerts a selective influence among the variety of possible objects of attention and that here resides the driving power which keeps the intellect at work. The feelings and the will are the invariable concomitants of the reason; but concomitance is one thing and dependence is another.

I may assume that truth does not simply *mean* a state of feeling. Enough I think has been said in the first part of this paper to show that pragmatism in that sense is a complete surrender of the problem of knowledge. And if the pragmatist or rather the humanist, persists in using the word in that signification I make two replies: in the first place the violence he is doing to language can minister only ambiguity and confusion in a debate that is already sufficiently involved; and in the second place he must permit me to employ the word in my own sense and prove if he can that in that sense it stands for an ideal which cannot be attained. If William James means by truth an emotional flavour we do not: and we agree to differ in terminology without prejudice to the substantial question. One is reminded of the saying of Thomas Reid that a man may call his daughter his cow and his cow his daughter and may then easily make statements that will astonish plain men.

Dismissing then this verbal entanglement our problem is this: is it or is it not a necessity of human nature that we shall believe certain things simply because we feel and will in certain ways? I reply that modern psychology has not proved anything of the kind, but leaves everywhere open the intellectual scrutiny and evaluation of these non-intellectual data.

The *cause* of a belief is one thing: the *vindication* of the belief may be very different. A child is taught to speak the truth on the authority of his parents' word. He may grow up even to manhood with a strong conviction that truthfulness is good and noble while lying is evil and base though he can give no better reason for this than that certain feelings were in early life wrought into the texture of his mind by the influence of those whom he loved. Does this prove that the basis of veracity is emotion? Is not a logical and intellectual problem still open after such a psychological history has been exhausted? Surely the admission that non-rational feelings and impulses have had a larger share than was at one time recognised in the production of belief does not imply that there is no distinct activity of intellect at all or that what we call intellect is simply feeling in disguise? The same psychology which insists upon an independent place for the emotional life may justly be appealed to as evidence that the range of emotion is not all-inclusive.

(β) The evidence which pragmatists draw from the controversy about the uniformity of nature will not bear the light of criticism.

Their procedure in this matter is to exploit to the utmost the difficulties which beset the attempt of Mill and other empiricist philosophers to find justification by inductive reasoning for that principle which is the *sine quâ non* of all science. They point out that every argument in this direction must be circular: for we cannot reach by induction that law upon which the inductive process itself depends. "No evidence," writes Dr. Schiller "will go to prove it in the least degree until the belief has boldly been assumed."[1]

[1] "Studies in Humanism," p. 361.

And the only ground on which we are entitled to assume it must consequently be the practical ground that we need it. "The foundation truths are at bottom postulates which we must accept *if the universe is to be fit to live in.*"

But the reply to this is clear. Uniformity of Nature may mean either of two things:—(1) it may mean that the universe is through and through rational, a whole in which not only natural forces but personal wills act and react constituting a single system: or (2) it may mean that the purely *physical* forces of nature are connected together in a fixed mechanical order.

It is only in the former of these senses that this postulate has given trouble to those who have aimed at establishing a metaphysic of logic. In the latter sense it is reached in precisely the same way as any other inference from experience and the reproach of circular reasoning cannot arise.

Now the mystery which the logicians have found in the postulate that the universe is rational is a mystery of their own making: no doubt the postulate cannot be demonstrated, and naturally so, for it is a genuine first truth. The enigma such as it is is simply identical with the enigma of the existence of the world itself. We are not given a universe partly physical partly spiritual about which we have in the first instance no assurance whether it be rational or irrational, and then called upon to produce adequate reasons for treating it as the one rather than as the other. The uniformity or, as I prefer to put it, the relational character of experience is just as much an ultimate datum as the sense-impressions themselves so that he who in obedience to Carlyle's advice "accepts the universe because he had better" has no right to quarrel with that order which is of the universe's essence.

Reality is not merely that which is *felt*: it is also that which is *thought*: only on condition of entering into a system of relations can a feeling become a fact of experience at all. The sense-process in knowledge has no priority either in time or in trustworthiness over the thought-process. They are but different aspects of a single concrete state. But if to think is to relate and if relating is synonymous with the establishing of causal connexions it becomes unmeaning to ask how thought can justify the law of causality. This is tantamount to asking how thought can justify itself. The only reality in whose existence we have any ground to believe is a reality that is given to us in relation. If we find a mystery here we do so by first separating where we have no right to separate, viz. the sense-process from the reason-process and then seeking evidence to justify us in bringing the two elements together. In other words the law of the Rationality of Nature is simply the metaphysical correlate of the logical law of Identity. It asserts no more than this — that since the universe is composed not of ταὐτα but of τοιαὐτα it is as the same τοιαὐτα that its elements must be treated whenever and wherever found. If they cease to act in the same way they have lost the only basis of self-identity that they ever had or ever can have. The Principle merely states in other language that the constituents of the universe are relational.

Colour has been lent to this artificial difficulty about the Uniformity of Nature by the observations which certain anthropologists believe themselves to have made of the growth of the conception in the mind of the savage. Primitive man we are told has no notion of the universe as an ordered system subject to the reign of law. Consequently the notion must

have been acquired from experience, and if so the pragmatist account of the way in which it was acquired is no doubt as good as any other. But the observation I speak of was never made by any anthropologist who knew how to observe in a fashion that is epistemologically important. The savage intelligence is indeed *relatively to the intelligence of civilized man* devoid of the idea of system: but if the statement is to be really significant not relative but absolute absence of the idea must be shown. Nothing whatever is proved by pointing to the primitive belief in chance and in the action of capricious deities. Shall we argue that Epicurus because he believed in τύχη and those in the Middle Ages who consulted the *sortes Vergilianae* were unaware of the law of causation? The question is everywhere one of degree. As soon as man was able to put a question, as soon as he began to ask for the cause of anything, he had a crude but a real notion of uniformity. It does not matter that he attributes events to the wrong causes: it does not matter that his explanations are in terms of his animistic concepts: he has the notion of cause and the notion of explanation. What he now requires is not to learn that things are connected but to learn where the connexions come in. And the progress of science ever since has been simply the gradual establishment of real in the place of unreal connexions. In short, the difference between the savage and the civilized mind seems to be not that the latter knows and the former does not know nature to be uniform but that the latter is much better able than the former to exhibit the uniformities in detail.

(γ) I join issue with the claim of the pragmatists that they have for the first time done justice to the

significance of the feelings and the will for the solution of the world-problem.

Many an argument has been rested particularly in theology upon the 'demands' or 'cravings' of human nature. That the soul of man 'cries out' for God; that we have an 'instinctive yearning' for immortality; that such and such a creed satisfies 'the deepest needs of the race'—arguments such as these have been made the basis of far-reaching beliefs. And if it is pointed out that we desire — perhaps very strongly—many things which science forbids us to expect the reply is given that we must distinguish those impulses which are casual and often misguided from those which are fundamental and rooted in our nature at its highest and best. One often turns from such discussions with a feeling that though logic may be on the side of negation there is a profound force somewhere and somehow in the argument of faith.

Pragmatism claims to have shown that such 'dialectic of the heart' may be entertained without doing violence to the scientific spirit. It attempts this not by asserting a sphere in which reason must be in abeyance but by pointing out that in science itself there is an element of such practical and emotional postulation and that consequently religion and reason rest in the end upon similar assumptions. This however is not the only point of view from which the case may be regarded and I think it is not the best.

It is one thing to say that the universe is through and through rational and it is quite another to say that it is by reasoning alone that we finite human beings can most successfully interpret it.

No doubt when viewed from the standpoint of omniscience the whole scheme of things is so fitly

joined together that every part is seen to involve every other part after that fashion on which the Hegelian loves to dwell. But this is entirely consistent with supposing that for minds which are far from being omniscient, and which get into hopeless entanglements when they try to appear so, this ratiocinating road is not the sole and that it is not even the most direct avenue into the ultimate heart of things. A mental operation does not cease to be intellectual because it cannot be embodied in a syllogism: and with all their protests against intellectualism it is within some sort of syllogizing that the pragmatists insist upon confining us. They demand some such major premiss as that "Whatever works is true": but there may well be intuitive convictions which refuse to be imprisoned in any formula whatever. Who can reduce to any such type our primary instincts which undoubtedly guide us to truth at a time when no other sort of guidance is possible? And what ground have we for supposing that a similar intuitive *nisus* after the truth of things may not operate on the very highest levels of speculation? Especially what right have we to think so if we have learned from Hegel that reason is everywhere immanent? for surely the emotions and the will must share this all-prevailing rationality. We could say so only if we had found in ratiocination a method of knowledge so sure and so complete that it has a title to supersede and to criticize the results of every other method whatsoever. No one who has been persuaded by the considerations in the foregoing pages that the range of ratiocination is limited very strictly and narrowly will admit any such pretensions. This line of thought by which a real sphere of action in the search for truth is granted to the non-ratiocinative

but still intellectual faculty of intuition is to my mind one of the most fertile suggestions of the greatest of living thinkers, M. Henri Bergson.

I cannot extend a paper which is already too long in order to deal with the further aspects of the pragmatist case. The last paragraph is intended to indicate a possible *modus vivendi* between the new school and its critics. It leaves the ideal of truth still intellectual while it makes room for much that is psychologically valuable in the pragmatist way of regarding the route by which truth is reached. I gladly recognize that we owe much to a speculation which has thus troubled the waters of philosophy at a time when they were in great need of being troubled. It has cast very wholesome doubt on the old dogmatic assurance about conceptual thinking: it has made us feel that the "recognizing" of a difficulty is not when it stands alone a satisfactory mental attitude to assume: and it has warned us that the traditional logic and the traditional theory of knowledge cannot go on permanently ignoring all that psychology is finding out about the procedure of actual knowing as a mental occurrence in time. On the other hand its constructions have been over-hasty. In its extreme form it has represented truth as a mere emotional colouring in judgments, a conclusion for which nothing in the recent psychology to which it appeals offers any justification. And in its eagerness to substantiate its own case it has been no doubt unintentionally unfair to other systems: it has claimed too many monopolies. Its importance lies in the shock it has given to so many slothful dogmatisms and in the determined effort it has made to bring philosophy face to face with the concrete things of life.

VI

RECIDIVISM: THE PROBLEM OF THE HABITUAL CRIMINAL[1]

"No man is born a criminal. But society gives him without his will the ruinous injection—of course a small dose only, a shot of an eighth of a grain, and despises him if the injected instinct grows and grows, and when it has destroyed the whole man then society goes heroically to work with police and court and punishment. . . . It is claimed that this country spends annually five hundred million dollars more on fighting the existing crime than on all its works of charity, education and religion; the feeling is at last growing that a fraction of that expense and energy would be ample for providing that such a quantity of habitual crime should not come to existence at all. For such a result, however, it is essential that all social factors co-operate in harmony and that no science which may contribute to this tremendous problem hold back. It is evident that it is the duty of modern experimental psychology to give its serious attention to such thoughts and a psychologist may therefore ask for a hearing."

HUGO MÜNSTERBERG.

EVERYONE has read of the "Dartmoor Shepherd," and all manner of opinions have been freely and somewhat rashly ventured regarding the wisdom or unwisdom of the Home Secretary's action. The incident has drawn attention to the problem of prison methods in general and in particular to the scheme of reform foreshadowed by Mr. Churchill in his speech in the House of Commons on 20th July, 1910. One type of critic finds in the whole affair simply ammunition for party use: question time in Parliament has been enlivened by sallies of wit from

[1] This paper was written in 1911 while Mr. Churchill was still Home Secretary. I have thought it best to preserve its original form.

the Opposition benches, and the suggestion apparently is that the Ministry in addition to its other sins is now angling for the support of the habitual criminals of the country. As these persons are themselves voteless it must be supposed that the Government are really manœuvring to secure the suffrages of the criminals' relatives, friends, and sympathizers! The proposal to introduce prison lectures and prison concerts has been fastened upon by the purveyors of humour in the comic journals and they have certainly made the most of it in jest and in cartoon. But surely no one would guess from the discussion which the subject has received that the thing which has given so much amusement on the one hand and has inflamed so much party feeling on the other is the obtrusion on public notice of one of the gravest social problems of our time.

In speaking thus of "Recidivism" I am not, I think, using exaggerated language, and I invite any one who thinks otherwise to a short study of criminal statistics.

I grant that in inferring from the official figures in this department one is liable to even more than the usual dangers that beset an argument from Blue Books. There are special circumstances which impair the value of these statistics and in some respects even vitiate it entirely. I do not think it possible to determine whether crime on the whole is increasing or diminishing. If we point to the numbers arrested and convicted we must remember that increase in the "vigilance and efficiency" of the police will affect this result quite as much as a decrease in criminality. And the sanguine conclusion that is sometimes drawn from the fall in the gaol population is completely discounted when we consider the growth of industrial

schools, reformatories, and penitentiaries. It is certainly the prevailing opinion among Continental writers that crime throughout Europe is increasing: the apparent exception that Great Britain presents is declared by some well-informed critics to be wholly illusory: and with the best possible will to vindicate the superiority of his own country the British criminologist who is alive to all the relevant data cannot say with confidence that this adverse opinion is wrong.

One thing however the statistical returns make abundantly clear—that here, as in other countries, there is a large class of habitual criminals, of persons who pass from one period of detention to another with short intervals of freedom which are used simply to supply material for a fresh prosecution. How often do we read in the newspapers of a 50th conviction! The ordinary reader supposes that the man concerned must be a *lusus naturae*: he clips out the paragraph to paste it in his scrap-book side by side with records of physical freaks and it does not occur to him that such cases are sufficiently numerous to constitute any real problem. Surely it is obvious on the face of it that society is using a wrong method with any person who is convicted anything like 50 times! If the object of imprisonment is to reform and to deter, that offender clearly is not being reformed, and is not being deterred. And the magnitude of the error of which the State is guilty is in proportion to the number of cases of which this is a specimen.

What then are the figures? They have been tabulated by a very careful observer—Dr. J. F. Sutherland—from the criminal returns of England and Scotland for the year 1903. As there is

unfortunately no reason to suppose that matters have improved since then I quote his results.[1]

In England in that year 223,910 sentences of imprisonment were imposed, but only 149,300 individuals were concerned. This means either that 74,610 persons were imprisoned twice during that year, or that a smaller number were imprisoned twice and some proportion more than twice. In round numbers Dr. Sutherland has found that 33,000 were recidivists. And he distinguishes inside this multitude two classes:

(*a*) the *criminal* recidivist—sentenced for serious offences, *e.g.* homicide, grave assault, burglary, theft, etc.

(*b*) the *petty* recidivist, *e.g.* persons convicted for drunkenness, breaches of the peace, vagrancy, and allied immoralities,

20,000 belong to the first class and 10,000 to the second. In Scotland the proportion is lower. In 60,080 imprisonments, 40,000 individuals were involved. Of these 4700 were recidivists, 3000 of the major and 1700 of the minor type.

Now a person who is sentenced to a term of imprisonment twice in the same year is probably a person with strong criminal tendencies. He will in most cases be sentenced many times again. And what could be more lurid than the plain statement of the figures in regard to convicts which Mr. Churchill gave the House of Commons in the speech to which I have already referred? He said:—

> "The hon. member for Salford has spoken of the serious figures of recidivism. They are indeed very serious. In 1900–1–2–3 about 4000 convicts were released from gaol—about

[1] J. F. Sutherland, "*Recidivism*," p. 9.

1000 a year. Three out of every four have already returned under long sentences."[1]

Any police official or any Governor of a gaol can think at once of a number of persons with whom he has himself had to deal, of whom it can be truthfully said that they have taken up crime as a profession. It is a profession which they are only permitted to exercise intermittently, but it is the main business of their lives. Some of them are constantly before the courts for small offences: the offenders on a great scale are as a rule either expiating a past crime or meditating a fresh one. Magistrates and judges are at their wits' end and are frankly saying so. One type of judge deplores the "maudlin sentimentality" that prevents him from imposing wholesale flogging. A second thinks that where short sentences have failed longer ones should be tried, and he inflicts a term which the newspapers brand as a piece of judicial savagery. A third finds that gaol treatment has proved ineffective, and he tries the experiment of a homily from the Bench, bidding the prisoner "go and sin no more." The same newspaper critics write about amiable gentlemen with tender hearts and not much harder heads, and it does not occur to them that what they call the "Via media between the policy of Mr. Justice A. and that of Mr. Justice B.," is the one method which has been discredited by trial, and that each judge is trying a tentative experiment in the hope of something better. But it does occur to every intelligent observer that such capricious treatment of an urgent problem is a scandal in public affairs.

It is remarkable that information regarding what is called the "movement of crime," has never excited

[1] *Times* Report, 21st July, 1910.

in this country the interest and attention which it has received abroad. There is a sort of half-conscious fatalism in the public mind, an impression that the situation however melancholy is unalterable. There has always been a large criminal population, and it is assumed that there always must be. It is a divinely appointed scourge of civilization, side by side with the earthquake and the pestilence. And just as it is wholly chimerical to hope for its abolition, so it is thought to be largely a waste of time to attempt even its reduction: all that we can do is to hold it at bay by the terrors of the penal code. In one respect there is indeed immense improvement on the public attitude of a quarter of a century ago. A resolute effort has been made to provide so far as possible against bringing youthful offenders, whose law-breaking has been trivial, under the taint and contamination of prison life. One can scarcely exaggerate the value of the Probation Act, and the Children's Act, or of the growth of the system of Industrial Schools. So far however the main advance in recent times has been confined to improved treatment of juvenile delinquency. And side by side with all reforming enterprise there is throughout the country a deep-seated cynical distrust of any measures that we can possibly adopt. Buckle in his day taught many persons to believe that a certain number of letters must every year be posted unaddressed, and that similarly the number of burglaries and of homicides bears a constant proportion to the population. It is not surprising that the failure of our prison system to reduce the proportion of crime should seem in no way extraordinary to those who regard that proportion as fixed by the eternal decrees.

Mr. Churchill's bold scheme of reform will be

welcomed by every man who declines to despair until he must about the removal or at least the mitigation of a public disorder. It will appeal to those who ask themselves whether failure may not have been due in part to bad methods, before they attribute the whole of a social evil either to fate or to the providential arrangements. They will be further encouraged by observing that in this case the defects of method are in no way obscure. And everyone who sympathizes with the purpose of the new policy must be prepared to support against public prejudice its administration in a patient and resolute spirit.

It is unfortunate that the most original criminologist of our time should have provided a sort of theoretical justification for that public apathy to which I have alluded. Lombroso claimed to have shown that in the majority of cases the attempt to reform the criminal must necessarily fail because he is generally a criminal by *birth*, and, if so, his anti-social instincts are such as can by no treatment whatever be either removed or modified. That disposition which he brought with him into the world he will retain throughout life no matter what discipline society may force him to undergo. His criminality is written in unambiguous characters for those who have eyes to see in the stigmata of his body and in the emotional reactions of his mind: without any evidence whatever of a man's actual delinquency Lombroso claimed to be able to diagnose him as a criminal from his hair and his lower jaw, his ears and his forehead, the asymmetry of his cranium and the tattoo marks on his chest. The moral seemed to be that if anyone with these physical peculiarities could be detected prior to the commission of those offences which he must inevitably sooner or later commit, the State would be

justified in placing him under immediate and permanent restraint.

Thus the sanction of a great authority was lent to the view that whatever else one may do with a criminal it is, in the great majority of cases, hopeless to think of curing him. No one however has shown much eagerness to take up the hunt for persons marked with the specified stigmata either with the object of shooting them at sight, or to have them confined in a State Institution for preventive detention: and Lombroso's influence so far as that influence is still potent has gone far to confirm the self-satisfied apathy towards the whole situation which is obviously the easiest and the most comfortable attitude to assume. The Englishman can read unmoved in the Blue Books that one in every forty-nine of his fellow-countrymen is sent to gaol in any given year and that fifty per cent. of the total gaol population at any time are persons who have served at least one term before; for he has the assurance of a great criminologist that things could not possibly be otherwise, and that nothing he can do—short of remedies far too drastic for the English mind to contemplate—will effect the smallest improvement in the matter.

I should be the last to depreciate the work of Lombroso, for he stimulated as none ever stimulated before or since the scientific study of crime. But the most discerning among his admirers have ceased to believe in the distinctive theory of criminality which is associated with his name. Here as everywhere else he is prolific in suggestion, propounding questions of which no one had previously thought and venturing answers at once daring and original. If his questions often lead nowhere and his answers are

demonstrably wrong we cannot forget that in some cases they have opened up for the first time fertile lines of inquiry. And his spirit lives much more in the men who have learned his method and are using it to refute his results than in the men who cling to his verdict in defiance of fresh witnesses and rebutting evidence.

Various reasons combined to discredit the notion of the "born criminal" in that sense in which Lombroso held it: it seems unnecessary to repeat in detail a criticism whose force is now so generally admitted. For example it soon appeared that among the criminologists who believed in stigmata there was little agreement as to what the stigmata are. Then someone suggested an *experimentum crucis*. Let a body of prisoners and a number of respectable persons be mixed together and dressed alike in prison uniform. Could the criminologist distinguish the two groups by any inspection of hair and nose, of facial angles and prognathous chins and pointed ears? This was actually put to the test at the International Prison Congress in Paris and I am assured that the result was of the most diverting kind. The collection of persons paraded included members of the Congress: I have not been able to discover their names, and perhaps the reason is not far to seek, although in view of the estimate that is now generally placed on the value of criminal stigmata I suspect that no libel action would lie.

But if Lombroso's main thesis no longer carries conviction it has none the less been and it still is the starting point for many a fruitful new hypothesis. In the attempt to verify these hypotheses results have emerged that are now both definite and indisputable: but their moral has not yet been adequately translated

into practice. While Mr. Churchill's scheme is a real advance on those that have preceded, it does not appear to take full advantage of all the knowledge that is now available. Let me draw attention to three main points:—

1. The necessity for more minute individualizing of the Criminal.
2. The Problem of Preventive Detention and its alternative, viz. the Indeterminate Sentence.
3. The Prevention of Juvenile Crime.

1. "Murder cases are almost the only ones respecting which the antecedents of the offender are seriously inquired into. But when this inquiry does take place the vast amount of degeneracy among criminals at once becomes apparent."[1] These are the words of a writer who has had exceptional opportunities of forming a reliable opinion and whose contributions are among the most illuminating we possess in English regarding the problems of crime—I mean the Rev. W. D. Morrison who writes from fourteen years' experience as chaplain to a large convict prison. He indicates precisely that defect in our system on which the research of recent criminologists has reached its most unhesitating conclusions. Before we assign his punishment to any offender we should discover as accurately as we can what manner of human creature the offender in question is. Convicted persons fall broadly into types: the differences which separate these types are of the first significance for their successful treatment and if we assume—as our legal procedure at present practically does assume—that these differences are so slight as to be negligible we are in conflict with the results of all the psychological investigation that has so far been expended on

[1] W. D. Morrison, "Crime and its Causes," p. 194.

the matter. Psychologists, alienists, and sociologists are supplying almost every year new methods of distinguishing these varieties but of this available and invaluable knowledge scarcely any use is at present made. In addition to the evidence on the "question of fact" almost all that the courts consider is whether the prisoner be a man or a woman, a child or an adult.

One might sum up in a few words the psychological assumptions that underlie a criminal trial in this country. The summary would be something like this:

"All adult human beings are either (1) *sane* or (2) *insane* persons. Whether in a trial the plea of insanity shall be entered is a matter purely for the prisoner's legal advisers. If this plea is entered the prison physician must determine whether it shall be allowed. In those rare cases where the defence insists upon it a consultant from the local asylum should be invoked to help the prison physician, who needs no special training for his office beyond that of an ordinary medical practitioner. Together they try to find out whether the accused falls under any of the recognized types of insanity. If certified as incompetent to plead the accused is not a criminal no matter what the evidence may be on the issue of fact. But if competent to plead then he is responsible to the law, and all such adults are responsible in the same way and to the same degree. Their law-breaking is to be ascribed so far as the courts are concerned to nothing whatever except a deliberate exercise of free-will on their own part. They are persons who have chosen a course of anti-social behaviour. Society consequently, in self-defence, must operate upon these perverse wills and

there are two agents known to be effective for this purpose. 'Nature,' said Bentham, 'has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pleasure and pain.' It is the judge's task then to decide how much pain shall be apportioned to the offence in each particular case. The wisdom of past legislators has devised a method by which without having recourse to the old forms of torture a considerable amount of pain may be compressed into a short time viz. the method of solitary cellular confinement. This has the further advantage of giving the criminal an opportunity of calm reflection, and thus serves at once to deter and to reform. Every convict therefore must begin his sentence with a period of such solitude."

It would be difficult to say exactly how many established truths of modern psychology are outraged in this paragraph. But it is not surprising that a system based on such assumptions about human nature should have yielded distressing results.

In the first place—a man may be profoundly abnormal in mental qualities without falling under any insane type such as the prison physician can detect or such as, even if he could detect it, would justify him in giving a certificate of incapacity to plead. Mr. Morrison has quoted figures collected from the researches of criminologists all over Europe which show that a very high proportion indeed of the delinquent class in every country is mentally deficient. They will not come under any of the historic definitions of irresponsibility laid down by our eminent judges—either that of Lord Hales that "there must be total deprivation of understanding and memory" or that remarkable one by Lord Mansfield that the accused must be incapable of

distinguishing right from wrong *in themselves* apart from consideration of the particular act, or that in force to-day that the man must be shown either not to have known the nature and quality of the act he was doing or not to have known it to be wrong. But though the great mass of criminals would easily slip through the wide meshes of tests like these Mr. Morrison's figures have clearly shown that very many of them have the hereditary taint of a drunken, a lunatic, a suicidal, or an epileptic parentage. He has recalled to us that even the coarse test for insanity which we now apply had the effect of declaring irresponsible 143 out of 441 persons convicted of wilful murder over a period of ten years. He has pointed out that while approximately not more than ten per cent. of the general population of England is illiterate 25 per cent. of the criminal population can neither read nor write and 72 per cent. "can only read and write imperfectly." He infers—and the inference is largely confirmed by experience of teaching in reformatories—that the low mentality of the criminal makes his education as a child extremely difficult, and that by ordinary school methods it may even be impossible.

Insane criminals are committed not to a prison but to an asylum on the ground that to use punitive methods with a lunatic is wanton cruelty. You may make him suffer but his suffering serves no useful purpose. And the reform I am now urging is that if and in so far as there is evidence of mental weakness which does not amount to what the law calls insanity the treatment and in particular the *punitive* treatment should be modified similarly and on similar grounds. With the principle of this reform I should think everyone agrees. And the Home Secretary

claims that he is endeavouring so far as possible to give effect to it. He said "There is a great element of weak-minded criminals in our system who are being increasingly segregated and classified and who should not be regarded as on the same footing as the ordinary rational offender." But he has not told us by what machinery or on what principle the segregation and classification are carried out or what differential treatment is adopted. In the absence of any announcement of changed methods we must assume that the old methods are in force and must consequently insist that the tests should be made far more delicate in view of the rapid accumulation of relevant knowledge in recent years.

M. Ribot of the Collège de France in his striking monograph "Les Maladies de la Volonté" writes as follows:

"Il faut d'abord remarquer qu'il y a une transition presque insensible entre l'état sain et ces formes pathologiques. Les gens les plus raisonnables ont le cerveau traversé d'impulsions folles; mais ces états de conscience soudains et insolites restent sans effet, ne passent pas à l'acte, parce que des forces contraires, l'habitude générale de l'esprit, les écrasent; parce que, entre cet état isolé et ses antagonistes la disproportion est tellement grande qu'il n'y a pas même lutte."[1]

Have we any means of drawing these fine distinctions with sufficient confidence to act upon them? Can we insert between the extremes any intermediate classes of mental weakness and correlate with each its appropriate treatment?

(*a*) We ought clearly to extend to all serious cases that inquiry into the antecedents of the offender

[1] Page 83.

which is now confined to persons convicted on the capital charge. Mr. Morrison quotes an admirable draft form drawn up by the German criminologist Herr Krohne as a suggestion of the sort of query sheet that might be used. It would correspond to what medical men call 'the history of the case.' It inquires into parentage—whether healthy, temperate, insane, suicidal, etc.; into upbringing, whether by parents or by others, and whether good or bad; into the record of brothers and sisters both as to health and as to character; into school attendance and educational proficiency; into trade or means of living, temperateness or the reverse; and into the bodily and mental characteristics of the prisoner so far as they can be ascertained. In short there is the same sort of examination as would be used by an alienist in a case where incipient derangement is suspected. If in three cases out of four only negative results were yielded we should be profoundly thankful to have detected the fourth.

(*b*) It seems high time that some use were made of the services of experimental psychology. In Great Britain the subject is new, but already many laboratories are at work in America and an eloquent plea has been made by Professor Münsterberg of Harvard in his book entitled "On the Witness-Stand" that we should recognize the relevance of what has already been done in the courts of criminal law. Professor Münsterberg's claim is at times a little ambitious, but we might surely at least employ those delicate tests which are now available to find out whether in power of attention, of memory, of association, and of reasoning the convict is above or below the normal person of his own education and opportunities. All the evidence we have goes to show that on the average a

marked inferiority would be detected. "When a school for criminal boys was carefully examined," says Professor Münsterberg, "it was found that of the two hundred boys one hundred and twenty-seven were deficient in their general make-up, either in the direction of feeble-mindedness or in the direction of hysterical emotion or in the direction of epileptic disturbance."[1] The application of these tests could, of course, be carried out only by persons trained in the methods of experimental psychology; but surely their evidence would be a valuable supplement to that of the purely medical inspector.

(*c*) We must recognize not merely on paper but in actual practice that mental disturbance is not simply a synonym for disturbance of intellectual functions. A man may think and reason with normal coherence and may yet—as M. Ribot has clearly shown and as all psychiatrists agree—suffer from either excess or deficiency of feeling and even from utter enfeeblement of will. The knowledge that the three modes of consciousness are—not indeed absolutely but relatively—independent is a notable advance that has been made by the psychological theory of our time. They by no means necessarily vary together. And if the alienist is not powerless to detect and classify these apathias and aboulias when he meets them in his private practice he can surely find them in those cases where we have the best reason to believe that they exist—viz. in a considerable proportion of the convict class. But at present our system gives him no opportunity to try.

Critics have often wondered that we should try to socialize the instincts of an anti-social man by leaving

[1] Page 242.

him for a prolonged period to his own morbid imagination. The idea appears to be that he will spend his time of solitary confinement in self-examination and reflection upon his past. That any such process is going on in the gross, listless, almost dehumanized mind of the convict is simply out of the question. If solitary confinement is to be defended it must be frankly on the ground that it is punitive. I by no means suggest that this is an illegitimate justification to assign. But if and in proportion as the case is truly pathological the infliction of pain must be minimized.

If the various persons under sentence are to be individualized in this way, and treatment adopted that will fit the offender rather than merely appease popular indignation by fitting the offence, it is quite obvious that considerable thought and considerable time must be expended on each case. This suggests the second criticism I wish to make.

2. Mr. Churchill dissents from the principle of the "Indeterminate Sentence." The House of Commons, he considers, showed "the greatest wisdom and justice" in rejecting that proposal. And it is clear that he has grave doubts about the propriety of "Preventive Detention" although by centralizing the machinery and thus securing more even and consistent application of this method he has himself made a notable contribution to its efficiency. But in the very principle itself he sees much that is open to serious question. "That Act," he said, "has now been at work for more than a year. I think its work ought to be very closely and carefully scrutinized and watched. . . . I would like to say that there is great danger of using smooth words for ugly things. Preventive detention is penal servitude in all its essence."

Now if by preventive detention for five years following a term of penal servitude for three years is to be understood simply that the convict gets penal servitude for *eight* years, and if by the indeterminate sentence is implied simply a sentence of penal servitude in the current meaning of that phrase with the additional element of indefinite duration, then I much doubt whether any criminologists of eminence would support either the one treatment or the other. But these forms of dealing with the habitual criminal are not so understood either by their advocates in this country where the matter is still largely one to speculate about or in America where there is already abundant practical experience of results. And so far as there is a difference of principle between the two schemes it seems to me that the indeterminate sentence is to be preferred.

I am thinking just now of the case of the habitual offender only: and the assumption common to both these methods of dealing with him is this:—if a man has a sufficient record of previous convictions and if we have the further evidence of alienists and psychologists that his case is suitable for such treatment, we should require that before his liberation he shall have given some evidence of being reformed. And the difference between them seems to be that in the one scheme the Judge of Assize would undertake to say beforehand how long this process will take and in the other it is urged that we should await the evidence of time.

It can, no doubt, be represented as wanton cruelty that a man should be committed to prison and left in suspense as to how long he must remain. One official has said that such treatment will "unsettle the prisoners," a remark which has been

caustically characterized as "revealing the mind of the typical gaoler."[1] But one must carefully consider in this connexion the limitations under which the indeterminate sentence has been introduced in some of the best known places where it is employed.

(*a*) It is restricted to cases of felons, mere misdemeanants being dealt with as formerly.

(*b*) The duration of confinement is by no means unlimited: the prisoner must be released at the expiration of a term intermediate in length between the maximum and the minimum terms allowed by law for the offence in question.

The issue then narrows itself down to this: A man whose record is black with previous convictions has been found guilty by a jury of a fresh felony. For his offence the law has defined a maximum and a minimum limit of punishment, within which *some* authority must determine a definite period in accordance with the special aggravations, mitigations and circumstances of the case. Of these circumstances certainly not the least relevant group is one which no presiding judge, trying a man whom he may never have seen before—as one out of perhaps fifty at the same Assizes—can possibly be in a position to estimate. Nor can anyone else form an opinion about the type to which the criminal belongs until he has been kept for some considerable time under observation. What is asked therefore is that that discretion which is now vested in the judge should rather in the case of habitual criminals be vested in those prison authorities who are in a better position to exercise it with knowledge.

It is quite obvious that if this change were

[1] Havelock Ellis, "The Criminal," p. 324.

introduced into our legal procedure it must be accompanied by a complete recasting of the prison staff. Such recasting would be on quite independent grounds a salutary reform. There is a movement in some other countries towards insistence on some qualifications other than a formidable physique in the men who are to have charge of convicts. It would surely be advantageous that they should have some instruction in the principles of their most difficult and responsible vocation. Mr. Havelock Ellis has acutely remarked that at present in many instances the warder's qualification to care for the morally infirm and the morally degenerate is about the same as the title that Sarah Gamp could produce to be entrusted with the management of a modern hospital.

And clearly if the head of a gaol is to be assigned such tremendous powers and such delicate duties of discrimination he must no longer be selected from the ranks of military gentlemen of advanced years for whom a grateful country is anxious to provide a sinecure position. The management of a prison must not alternate with the governorship of a hospital as the *otium cum dignitate* which rewards a Colonel in the fulness of his age. We require persons chosen strictly with a view to the functions that they are going to exercise: what the qualifications should be it is not for anyone to say until much expert evidence has been taken on a subject which is just beginning to force itself into public notice. But they must obviously include a legal training, especially on the criminal side, and it is equally obvious that the Governor must have constantly at his disposal the services of persons specially qualified in psychological medicine. At present it happens from time to time

that a man who has received a term of imprisonment is transferred in a few weeks from the gaol to the asylum. This occurs however mainly in those gross cases where his utter irresponsibility is patent to any warder who comes near him. Few I think will doubt that if cases of the kind were systematically searched for by those competent to detect them they would be found far more frequently. And it is surely in the direction not of greater severity but of greater humanity to the criminal class in general to urge that we should not wait for such cases to obtrude themselves, but should take measures to find and to stop all infliction of such useless suffering.

We are no longer entirely in the dark as to what should be done with such persons when we find them. I can only refer in passing to the Report of the Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. But we should undoubtedly find other classes who require special treatment as well as the mentally infirm. In the great adult reformatory of New York the principle of educating the criminal has achieved notable success. By no means every sort of offender is a fit subject for a reformatory, and in this country there is a curious prejudice against applying any such method to persons of mature age. But we must be on right lines in assuming that when a man has been cradled and brought up in a foul and vicious slum, has had no training of his mental powers except so far as he was trained to expert thieving when a child, has known no social intercourse except in the brotherhood of crime, it is before all things necessary that the State, if it hopes to make out of him an honest man, should construct for him for a time a healthier environment, should waken his mental faculties, and should give him a chance to benefit by those human-

izing influences of social life without which most of us might have been even as he. Those who have been so much entertained to hear of a scheme for prison lectures and prison concerts might read with profit of what is being done by the authorities of the Elmira Reformatory, and might then consider how our statistics of recidivism will bear comparison with theirs.

Mr. Churchill is much impressed by a way of regarding the indeterminate sentence which seems to me really sentimental. He emphasized the fact that no matter what mitigations may be introduced "the convict stands deprived of everything a free man calls life." And the argument is that to deprive him of that for an indeterminate period is a Draconian measure. But there is no reason to think that the indeterminate sentence is going to have the effect in every case, or even in most cases, of lengthening the period of detention. American experience of its working points I am informed rather in the other direction. It may quite as easily act in favour of the prisoner as against him. But in those cases where it acts against him, which would certainly be cases for the most part of hardened habitual offenders, is there really any grievance? I should feel no compunction about taking from the professional burglar and keeping from him for a considerable length of time all that he means by life. We are surely entitled to insist that the transition for such persons from penal servitude as we now have it to that ordinary industrial life to which we rashly suppose them to be looking forward, shall be gradual and tentative. Could we not interpose a period of restricted freedom? Should we not obtain at once more security for the law-abiding population and more efficient influence on

the man's own character by lengthening his treatment but altering its quality?

3. I have tried to commend a spirit of hopefulness in dealing even with the habitual criminal adult. If we have so greatly failed in the past we are at least learning the lessons of our failure: we can console ourselves with the reflection that our methods were bad and that we have better ones in view. At the same time everyone who looks honestly at the facts will recognize that we must rely very much more upon schemes of prevention than upon schemes of reformation. The most sanguine believer in the ultimate victory of medical science over disease looks for success rather to those measures, whether publicly or privately initiated, which will prevent persons from becoming diseased at all than to the discovery of new drugs or of better surgery to cure them. And prison reformers—however else they may differ—are agreed on the paradox that recidivism must be checked before recidivism begins. The strategic point of the position is clearly the juvenile offender.

Are we then taking all the precautions which are suggested by our present knowledge of the causes of crime to prevent the development of criminal tendency in the young?

It seems to me that we are allowing ourselves to be hampered by that British tradition which has been so influential for both good and evil—I mean the "rights of the parent." At one time the parent, with the sanction of the doctrinnaires of social and economic theory, exercised rights which are now rudely challenged by the School Attendance Officer, the Factory Inspector, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. But he still exercises the right to the custody of his child in his intervals

of liberty no matter how black may be his criminal record or how obviously his home is adapted to be the nursery of crime. And that very considerable proportion of children who have been either deserted by their parents or handed over to the custody of someone else are often apprenticed either to vagrants or to thieves. In both cases we deal with them not before but after their criminal tendencies whether inherited or acquired by imitation have already found practical expression. Why should we hesitate to interfere with the authority over children of those parents or guardians who have proved themselves unfit to exercise it? Why might we not assert the claim of the public to such interference just to that degree—ranging from a mild supervision and inspection to complete control—which is indicated by the grossness of the case. "At present," writes Mr. Morrison "the community confines its operations to bestowing industrial training on children who have actually fallen; it is probable that it would be a wiser and in the end a more economic policy to bestow a similar training on those who are likely to fall." It is notorious that while destitution plays a far less important *rôle* than one might have supposed in the production of adult crime it is of the first significance for juvenile delinquency. If a boy inherits or rapidly absorbs from the surroundings of his "home" a criminal tendency, and if he is given no trade by which he might earn an honest living the consequence is almost inevitable. And once that consequence has revealed itself such persons form one of the intractable and hopeless types of habitual criminal. When and where shall we find the reformer who will face this question with the same courage with which Lord Shaftesbury ended once for all

those scandals of child-labour on which we now look back with shame?

These considerations seem to me to justify the conclusion that our methods of dealing with the problem of crime are not really abreast of all that we now know about its causes and conditions. We are undoubtedly improving these methods: we are improving them in ways that seem to some critics rash and reckless: but the critic in this field who urges that we should "move slowly and cautiously" too often intends by this that we should be so cautious as not to move at all. It is by no means the least among the recent improvements that the Home Office is now putting more detailed information at the disposal of those who are both willing and able to think to some purpose about the facts if only they can get them. Even here however we might profit by the example of the facilities for such research which are afforded in some other countries. In a recent popular magazine a writer makes merry over "the insane lust for statistics" in a Government Office. We are not troubled by any manifestation of this in the department of prison affairs. I think we should all welcome in the matter of criminal returns a little of that enthusiasm which is expended on foot and mouth disease among sheep.

I need scarcely say that with *genuine* caution in tackling this problem every man who appreciates the complexity of the facts must have the fullest sympathy. For he will be thoroughly alive to that danger of hasty theorizing which is perhaps more conspicuously present in the short history of criminology than in that of most other studies. How often do we hear for example that to enlightened minds crime is now nothing but a disease and that a prison

should be in no sense a punitive but solely a curative agent? I am quite unable to follow the enlightenment which is so enlightened as to know that a callous scoundrel should not suffer for his crimes but should be persuaded or educated out of them. There is not a particle of real evidence to show that the criminal is *always* a degenerate or that there is not a deplorable amount of crime which is sheer moral turpitude and to which the old punitive methods are thoroughly appropriate. The reader will remember the notable prosecution for cruelty concluded a few weeks ago at Worcester Assizes. During the days of the trial the attention of a very wide public was riveted upon the details of the systematic brutality which had been practised for two years on a little child. No evidence was called regarding the mental state of either of the persons convicted and as two were involved it seems less likely that this element was significant. It is a distinction of our British law that in cases like this popular violence is restrained with so strong a hand as to be made impossible: but I confess to seeing something not wholly discreditable to the national character in the fact that the mob outside the Worcester Courthouse could with difficulty be held in check. It is because, while often brilliant and original, the criminologists have been so one-sided and at times so extravagant that they are looked upon by statesmen as doctrinnaires and that their work has not yet the influence to which one might think it entitled.

One stanza in that lurid masterpiece, "A Ballad of Reading Gaol," suggests an intensely pathetic element of prison life. It is an element which if we may trust the observation of those best competent

to judge is not often to be seen: but it undoubtedly exists. I mean the anticipation by the criminal himself of the goal to which his perverse instincts are leading him. The poet's scene is the prison yard: the other convicts are following with morbid interest every movement of that one among them who

> "often said that he was glad
> The hangman's hands were near."
> . . . . . .
> "So with curious eyes and sick surmise,
> We watched him day by day,
> And wondered if each one of us
> Would end the selfsame way,
> For none can tell to what red hell
> His sightless soul may stray."

What poignant meaning these lines may bear if we think of a man with intellectual powers unimpaired but with a shattered and nerveless will! He is literally the impotent onlooker at the tragedy of his own career. He knows himself in the grip of impulses and passions which he can no more control than he can regulate the beating of his heart. And he wonders, like the victim of cancer, when and where the next token will appear of the taint that has come into his blood, it may be from a diseased and vicious parentage. That there is a proportion of such cases no one acquainted with the facts can doubt. My appeal is that the State should find something better to do with them than to commit them to that cellular confinement where

> "Some grow mad and all grow bad,
> And none a word may say."

And I urge this with the greater confidence because the State has itself by a policy of culpable negligence allowed sources of crime which it might have checked to luxuriate and flourish. The public responsibility is

no longer obscure, and even those who scarcely pretend to a civic conscience are becoming ashamed of the old phrases about *laissez-faire* and vested interests and natural rights. We have watched the growth of slums and overcrowded tenements, and the unbridled activities of the licensed trade : no one can now affect to be unaware of the share taken by each of these agencies in the manufacture of the criminal. As the Home Office lets us have more and more statistics we shall take care that the public shall have this information in such quantitative terms as the subject admits : there is a peculiar impressiveness in numbers. And we must go on insisting that until these scandals of city life are gripped with a firm hand all other attempts to solve the problem of crime in general or of recidivism in particular are but methods of palliation and of disguise.

VII

PESSIMISM

"I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained.
I stand and look at them long and long,
They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
Not one is dissatisfied."

WALT WHITMAN.

"But helpless pieces of the game he plays
Upon this chequer-board of nights and days,
Hither and thither moves and checks and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays."

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

THERE is extreme reluctance in many quarters to face boldly and honestly the "Case for Pessimism." It is a natural reluctance: we can scarcely be expected to examine without bias that supreme issue in which everything we value is at stake. Hence we burke discussion by various phrases more or less unsatisfactory. One man remarks that the question ought never to have been raised, and does his best to forget in the busy activities of life that the question ever has been raised. Another is sure that the pessimists who press this matter are persons of a morbid temperament who need fresh air and careful diet: at the same time he cannot suppress an uneasy feeling that there is a great deal in what they say. A third takes refuge in the time-honoured comment that their

case admits of no reply but produces no conviction, forgetting that not a few thinkers have already been convinced and concluding somewhat hastily that there is no reply where a reply has not been seriously sought for.

While this attitude seems somewhat shallow it is undoubtedly preferable to that other temper of mind in which the condemnation of life is nothing more than a literary cant. A strange burlesque surely—that a philosophy should become a *fashion* through the influence of some great poet or novelist who chances to be the idol of the hour. Mr. Hardy and the late Mr. Swinburne have both had an outer fringe of disciples who have believed themselves to admire them, and who so far as possible have attempted to be their imitators, but who have succeeded only in becoming their caricaturists. The High Priest of pessimism was at one time Byron and its canonical scriptures were found chiefly in "Childe Harold" and "Manfred." The humour of the situation was thus pointed in a few lines by Macaulay:—

> "Among that large class of young persons whose reading is almost entirely confined to works of imagination the popularity of Lord Byron was unbounded. They bought pictures of him, treasured up the smallest relics of him, they learned his poems by heart and did their best to write like him and to look like him. Many of them practised at the glass in the hope of catching the curl of the upper lip and the scowl of the brow which appear in some of his portraits. A few discarded their neck-cloths in imitation of their great leader. For some years the Minerva Press sent forth no novel without a mysterious unhappy Lara-like peer. The

number of hopeful undergraduates and medical students who became things of dark imaginings on whom the freshness of the heart ceased to fall like dew whose passions had consumed themselves to dust and to whom the relief of tears was denied passes all calculation."[1]

There is a pessimism however which is neither an affectation nor a mere passing mood of mind, neither a circumstance of fashion nor a circumstance of temperament, but a reasoned doctrine of philosophy, a doctrine which has become elaborated into a system, and which is finding expression at the hands of at least one or two of the greatest literary artists of our time.

In a sense the name "Pessimism" is clearly open to objection. Etymologically it ought to mean the theory that this world is the worst possible.

But he would be a rash dogmatist indeed who felt justified in saying so much as that. Nature may have a reserve force of which we have never dreamed. If we defy it to do its worst we may "in fear and trembling expect it to bring forth some new and unconjectured horror."[2] But the word Pejorism which some writers propose to substitute sounds pedantic and uncouth. After all Pessimism has the prestige of long usage and its meaning is a matter of general agreement.

The theory is commonly defined as the conviction that life is not ultimately valuable, or otherwise as the conviction that those aims and purposes which alone make life worth living are inherently and therefore permanently impossible of attainment. That man for example is not necessarily a pessimist who

[1] Essay on "Moore's Life of Lord Byron," *ad fin.*

[2] Schiller, "Riddles of the Sphinx," p. 111.

declares that the pains exceed in number or in intensity the pleasures of life unless pleasure is for him the only final standard of worth. Pessimism consequently admits of as many varieties as there are varieties in our criteria of evaluation. Let me illustrate by referring briefly to one or two of these criteria.

We may believe with Kant that the only thing unconditionally good is the good will. If so the material and the intellectual progress of the race will seem to us relatively unimportant. For we shall constantly have in mind that progress in both these senses by no means implies moral improvement and may even be associated with moral decay. We shall recall the poignant words of Caliban:

> "You taught me language and the profit of it
> Is I know how to curse."

We shall feel that if mankind is going forward in the attainment of the good will it matters little where else it may be going backward: if it is going backward here it matters not at all where else it may be going forward. Consequently our outlook upon life will derive its colour entirely from the answer which we can give to the question "Is humanity becoming morally better or morally worse?"

Now it is by no means obvious that the answer must be such as an optimist desires. It has seemed to not a few thoughtful writers that from the moral standpoint the race has been losing as well as gaining. Advancing civilization has been by no means an unmixed blessing. "As man's nature becomes larger and richer he becomes at the same time capable of profounder sins; admitted into a holier sanctuary he is exposed to the temptation of a greater sacrilege."

What is the net result if we compare the twentieth century in this reference alone with the Middle Ages, or even if we compare the twentieth century with the eighteenth?

I am convinced that the advantage of such a comparison lies entirely with our own time, but it is far from being sheer paradox to think differently. And if a Kantian moralist does think differently what must be the consequence? What if he cannot find any encouragement in history or in experience to believe that a genuine moral progress is going on? What if he have convinced himself that the forces which retard such progress are as permanent elements in life as the forces that promote it? What if he comes to recognize a law of retrogression rooted in the psychology of our nature and in terms of which humanity must develop downwards as fast as it develops upwards? It follows that life is for him valueless because there is not and there is never going to be enough virtue in it to redeem it.

Again, there is that curiously modern type of mind which finds in the advance of the empire of man over the material world the only element in life which saves it from being sordid and empty. The accumulation of pleasures and the pursuit of "mere happiness" is looked upon as an ignoble aim for man, as unworthy of "a being of such large discourse." No multiplying or refining of such aims could make it worth while to live for these alone: nor can those moral purposes whose progressive development was sufficient for Kant justify in the eyes of our enthusiast for knowledge the existence and the travail of humanity. Only in intellectual advance, only in those triumphs which are wresting one by one her secrets from nature can he discover either an adequate

task or an adequate reward. There are scientists to whom their science has ceased to be their servant and has become their master: on the altar of their investigations they seem willing to sacrifice all the things that are precious to other men. And they will sometimes boldly declare that the value of knowledge is to them not merely greater than but actually incommensurable with the value of anything else whatsoever. The great physiologist in Grant Allen's story [1] when he found himself dying of an eastern fever urged the medical student at his side not to miss the unique chance of making a note of the symptoms: it was an obscure disease, he said, and never before had it been observed in a person who was capable of describing the subjective sensations in accurate scientific terms: but he must make haste for at any moment the patient might lose consciousness.

Now clearly one type of pessimism is the peculiar affliction of such a temperament. It is distressed by intellectual defeat: and anyone who is not incapable of learning by experience must recognize in how sorry a plight is the man who stakes all his hopes on the perfecting of knowledge. What must happen if he convinces himself, as he so commonly does, that those problems which above all others he wishes to solve are permanently insoluble, that it is the destiny of speculative effort to go on for ever in a struggle that must be vain? Shipwreck has been made of that which alone was worth saving; effort has been baffled where and where alone success was of value.

Thus there seems to be an almost indefinite variety in the objects which to different people are the only things worth the struggle of life: to each of them

[1] 'Hilda Wade.'

someone can point and say "He that toucheth that toucheth the apple of my eye": and the logic that removes it finally from his reach must be for him a logic of pessimism.

The commonest type however is that view which finds fatal deficiency not in such things as virtue or knowledge but in pleasure or happiness: and, in the loose psychology which has not yet been wholly banished even from philosophical books, pleasure and happiness are synonymous terms. The world it is said is on the whole *not* happy but the reverse: and those indications of a joy in life on which the optimist relies are fitly described in the words of Mr. Hardy as but brief and occasional episodes in a general drama of pain. I shall briefly consider this form of the theory and I think that not a few of the arguments and rejoinders which are relevant to it will be found to apply *mutatis mutandis* to other varieties of pessimism as well.

We shall first clear away one obvious but very superficial criticism. A short and easy way with the pessimists is to charge them with insincerity or at least with self-deception. It is sometimes said that their argument if sincere would lead them to desire and to welcome death. If life is bad why are all of us whatever our speculative theory may be, so extraordinarily anxious to live? Why do we shrink from drawing the practical moral? A Schopenhauer or a Von Hartmann is just as distressed as anyone else at the onset of a dangerous illness: he shows no tendency at all to look upon it as giving promise of a happy release.

This criticism is a glaring case of "intellectualist fallacy." It is an odd notion indeed that a person's opinion must be insincere, because he does not follow

it out in practice to its logical issue. And if such a view were correct I know not where we should look for sincerity of judgment. An illustration will perhaps make this clear. How many persons have writhed in agony through a sleepless night of toothache and yet in the morning have refused to have the tooth either drawn or treated in any appropriate way whatsoever! There are strong-minded persons who are found on the dentist's doorstep before breakfast, who sit down resolutely in the chair and who, scornful of laughing-gas and still more scornful of cocaine, bid him if he thinks it right take out five in succession. But there are weaker brethren who admire these heroes but cannot imitate them. For their own part they follow a course in which theory conflicts with practice in the most shameless fashion. Their friends point out to them that they are suffering a great deal more pain in the end than would be involved in one short sharp wrench: they reply that if they choose to suffer so much extra pain this is their own affair and they feel all the while that they are saying something both lamentably peevish and contemptibly weak.

Now what should we think of the logic of him who argued thus?

"You cannot really be suffering so badly as you say. Your refusal to adopt the obvious remedy shows that your complaint is largely insincere. You may indeed be experiencing pain but it must be so slight that you think on the whole and in the end the pain of extraction or of stopping would be greater." I think we should conclude that the critic knew more about psychological hedonism than about human nature. Is it not rather the fact that the victim goes on hoping against hope that by some

accident or some miracle the pain will suddenly and permanently stop? And if the hope is in view of experience irrational have we not here simply a confirmation of the truth that the rational forecast of the greatest sum of pleasures on the whole is not the only and is not even the strongest factor in determining conduct?

Now to him who thinks that the common desire for the prolongation of life is a proof that life is on the whole pleasant I put this argument:—Whatever you mean by saying that the victim of a distressing toothache may continue to refuse the natural remedy —a remedy which would clearly save him no small amount of suffering in the end—and that he may go on refusing it without being under any illusion or miscalculation on the matter this the pessimist means by saying that the irrational will to live can survive all demonstrations that life is not good but evil. The man may be literally waiting for something to turn up—as William James puts it, he will stand things just a little longer to see what the next post will bring.

But further, one must insist on that tragic array of examples which are constantly emphasizing the untruth of the apparent truism that to *all* men life is sweet.

It is estimated that in the United Kingdom alone every year three thousand five hundred persons die by their own hands: that is, our question receives every year three thousand five hundred answers that are short, sharp and unambiguous. To say that all such persons are of unsound mind does not now I think seem satisfactory or convincing to thoughtful observers. The significance of the statistics of suicide is such as cannot be concealed even by the 'splendid

mendacity' of a coroner's jury. When one makes allowance for those whose minds have been unhinged by disease or overwhelmed by professional or commercial disaster there remains a melancholy residuum of cases where the only indication of insanity lies in the act of self-destruction itself. Almost daily the newspapers record examples of this: letters are left behind in terms that are distressingly coherent and incisive, praying to be saved as from a last indignity from the farcical verdict 'Suicide while of unsound mind.' I think that in at all events a certain proportion of these cases we must frankly admit that the writers do not fall under any insane type: they are persons who in their own way and by their own standards of valuation have made up their accounts with life and have deliberately concluded that the balance is on the wrong side.

Can your optimistic philosopher prove that this piece of moral accountancy is incorrect? If he is willing to attempt it I shall try to indicate to him briefly the magnitude of his task. I assume that he undertakes to argue the question on purely naturalistic grounds: he concentrates attention simply upon the conditions of existence in this mortal life and he professes to find those conditions such as to render that life on the whole happy.

1. He must not simply add together pleasures and pains irrespective of who is pleased and who is pained. If A suffers the tortures of a lingering disease it will not serve to point out that B was at the same time deriving intense exhilaration from the victory of his horse on the Derby. And the fallacy of which this is a gross and obvious instance is really at the bottom of much that passes muster as optimistic argument. The common way of raising our

question seems to imply it: we are asked "Does the world contain more happiness than misery?" The answer is that the abstraction known as the world is not a sentient being at all, and consequently is neither happy nor miserable. You can no more add the state of feeling of one person to the state of feeling of another and obtain their algebraic sum than you can add together their religious beliefs or their moral characters and obtain a total belief or a total character. It is of course equally inadmissible to attempt the addition of their sufferings; and the recognition of this may fairly discount much of the rhetorical exaggeration in which pessimists are wont to indulge. A world in which a pestilence or a prairie fire occurs is so far hedonistically bad: but to argue that a world in which there have been two pestilences or two prairie fires is hedonistically twice as bad proves nothing except the inadequacy of mathematics as a training for moral and social speculation. For there is no common patient upon whom both afflictions have descended: they do not form parts of a single sentient experience. Calculations of this kind are in short the crowning absurdity of the atomistic psychologists. They are in some degree plausible if applied to an individual: if an underpaid clerk were asked whether he would prefer six months' solitary confinement followed by a permanent doubling of his salary or no imprisonment and no rise of salary he could attach a meaning to the question: he would probably think it a rather cruel case of Hobson's choice but he could genuinely weigh the alternatives, and would doubtless use some such phrase as "balance of happiness" or "greatest amount of happiness on the whole." But there is no common soul of London to decide whether it is hedonistically

better to preserve Mayfair plus Bethnal Green or to have no Mayfair and no Bethnal Green.

This argument against the arithmetical calculation of pleasures and pains obviously cuts both ways: but it cuts far deeper against optimism than against pessimism. The existence of a few favoured persons in a state of permanent happiness would go a very short way to support the optimist's case: but I am not sure that the permanent and incurable misery of even one individual would not constitute an apology for pessimism: it would be evidence that the world on the whole is not good, for if there had been no world those who are now happy would not have been conscious of any loss while the one victim would have been spared.

We are surely on the right track in that way of thinking about moral issues which we owe mainly to Christianity, that way which neglects averages, neglects calculations about mankind in the mass, and concentrates rather on the individual, insisting that no single person is a negligible or anything like a negligible quantity. *Falsus in uno falsus in omnibus:* somehow or other the cosmic order must show itself friendly not only to humanity in general but to every individual in particular if it is to be called hedonistically good.

2. One must remember how soon the list of what are regarded as 'preventable' pains and 'justifiable' pains is exhausted and how many are left still outstanding.

Only the shallowest minds have been unable to see that pain is an element which, human nature being as it is, it would be neither possible nor desirable to eliminate from life. One melancholy and somewhat cynical writer whose career had

been intensely tragic expresses himself in these terms:

> "During the last few months I have after terrible difficulties and struggles been able to comprehend some of the lessons hidden in the heart of pain. Clergymen and people who use phrases without wisdom sometimes talk of suffering as a mystery. It is really a revelation. One discerns things one never discerned before. One approaches the whole of history from a different standpoint."

That difficulty stimulates effort, that danger trains to foresight and to caution, that disappointment is the nurse of patience, and that even sheer suffering is a discipline in courage and endurance—these are the veriest truisms and commonplaces to anyone who thinks seriously about the problem of life. Even the struggle for existence is partially vindicated when one reflects that the virtues of hardness can be learned only in a hard school. And that softening of manners under religious influence which has deposed the warrior to enthrone the philanthropist, which has made us

> "count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child"

is fatally misconceived if it is thought of as an effeminate shrinking from pain. It is rather a transition like that which is observable from the purely physical sufferings of the young child to those sufferings of adult life in which the physical element is often the least poignant. Or again it may be compared to the difference between the pain of the animal and that of the human species.

But it is difficult to see how such justification can be offered for those calamities which no foresight could have prevented and from which consequently

no lesson can in this way be drawn. I am not now thinking merely of the earthquake, the famine and the plague, though our optimist will have his task here too. I am thinking of those facts of heredity which have so greatly darkened our outlook upon life by impressing upon us how hopeless is the struggle both physical and moral to which a large proportion of our race are born.

> "The image," writes Dr. Schiller, "of a multitude of warring and destructive beasts which Plato regarded as the inner state of the tyrant's soul fails to describe the full horror of the facts: for each man's soul contains the representatives of ancestral savages and beasts, and has out of such discordant elements to form a government to guide his life."[1]

It is indeed nature's way that the sins and even the misfortunes of the parents should be visited upon the children. Many a criminal in all probability has ended his days upon the gallows chiefly because he grew up in an environment where the moral nature was strangled at its birth: of the physical wrecks with which our city slums are filled and of not a few wrecks which are far from the slums the explanation lies in the generation that preceded: their battle with circumstance however valiantly and even heroically it may be waged is humanly speaking impossible throughout: defeat was predetermined before a blow was struck.

3. If our optimist appeals, as he certainly will, to the gradual amelioration of human lot which is being wrought by the evolution process we must impress upon him that that process has another side. His argument is that the evils upon which pessimism

[1] "Riddles of the Sphinx," p. 104.

insists are transient evils, mere incidents of a development which is still incomplete. Half-finished work must not be judged: if Solon was right in bidding us call no man happy till the end it is at least equally advisable to hold in reserve our verdict upon life till we have seen what nature yet has in store. This is especially incumbent on us as the signs of improvement are unambiguous and are rapidly multiplying. All pain arises from maladjustment between the individual and his surroundings: but science is every day teaching those who have eyes to see and readiness to obey new methods by which such maladjustments may be repaired. The advance of medicine has removed not a few of the ancient scourges of humanity and even the least sanguine have ceased to set limits to the possibilities of the future. The utopian dreams of a generation ago are the commonplace performances of to-day.

Such an apology for evil seems to me wholly unsatisfactory. We have heard so many confident predictions of what science is going to do for us that we are beginning to feel mocked. "No more disease in ten years if you do what I tell you": "No more deaths before the age of 150 at least if you subsidize my schemes of preventive medicine." Most of us have ceased to be very sanguine about these promises: we have an impression that if experience is to be trusted Nature will find new instruments of chastisement for the race though the old should be destroyed. And I think the optimist could scarcely play more thoroughly into the hands of his opponent than by appealing to the evolution process as a healer of the world's pain. Huxley once spoke of the 'long sad story of sentient life upon this planet.' If the law of the process be

correctly described as the 'struggle for existence' I challenge anyone to produce a more savage or a more ruthless conception. It matters little whether when the evolution goal has been reached that discord between the individual and the environment which is the condition of pain shall have been overcome. For us the fact of interest is the process of overcoming, a process which has been going on for ages and of which the end is certainly not yet in sight. And it seems in its very essence antithetical to morality: the weaker just because he is weaker always and everywhere goes to the wall. "That the carnivores may live the herbivores must die": that a certain number of persons may become highly developed and highly cultivated a great number of other persons must remain undeveloped and uncultivated: and while from the point of view of the carnivorous and of the cultured this state of things may be highly satisfactory it will seem otherwise to the animal which must be eaten that the lion may maintain his physique and to the drudge whose drudgery is the *sine qua non* of the refinement of his brother. And it is cold comfort for either to be told that the evolution process is bringing nearer that blessed time when everyone's interest will be identical with everyone else's.

Moreover even though we grant that pain springs solely from faulty adaptation, what reason have we to believe that adaptation is ever going to be other than faulty? What would be necessary in order that it should be perfect? It would be necessary that the individual and the environment should become modified always in precisely corresponding ways and at precisely corresponding speeds. But is there any ground to suppose such a

pre-established harmony? Just as so much pain has resulted in the past from the persistence into one stage of society of those habits which were appropriate to an earlier stage—the militant type for example surviving into the industrial—so we may expect similar dislocations to be permanently with us. There is a principle of dissolution no less than a principle of evolution in social growth. Instincts remain when their exercise is no longer salutary and the habits of life cannot follow in rapidity of transformation the ceaseless modifications of the environment.

4. But the argument has been seriously understated in granting that from the point of view of those who gain by it there is nothing amiss with the evolution process. There is such a thing as sympathetic pain—and it is much more widely diffused than sympathetic pleasure. He who has imagination enough to realize and feeling enough to be distressed by griefs that are not his own will find almost daily new causes of suffering. We are confronted with a stranger paradox than that which troubled Job as he wondered at the prosperity of the unrighteous: for we find that the higher is one's moral sensitiveness the greater is his sympathetic pain. Consequently one is afflicted not merely in spite of but actually in direct proportion to his merit.

5. Moreover in one conspicuous respect that increase of knowledge in which it is usual to exult has been simply an increase of sorrow. An acute writer, thinking of the inherited and congenital disabilities under which so many persons make their entrance into the world remarks:

"'Tis ill dicing with the gods who load the dice with death."

And it seems as if all that was wanting to make the tragedy of the situation complete has been supplied by the growth of knowledge itself. Those who sit down to play now know that the dice are loaded, but they also know that they must sit down and play to the end just as if they had a real chance. And, though in moments of reflection they recognize that they have no chance, it is their fate constantly in the excitement of the game to forget this and to be reminded only through the monotonous regularity of their disappointments and their failures. One of the things that advancing science has done for us is to tear away those merciful illusions which made tolerable and even enjoyable the life of a simpler age. All that was lacking to make the edifice of pessimism perfect was that very naturalistic hypothesis which is offered to us as the last triumph of human thought. We only required amid the wreck of earthly hopes and the baffling of earthly aims to be assured that man has no higher origin and may expect no higher destiny than those other creatures which are subject to the universal law of death.

There is indeed one short and easy way of shelving the whole difficulty: if I am not mistaken it is the way that is adopted by very many persons who have felt in some degree the strength of the pessimist case. We may say that the matter is one of individual temperament and individual feeling. In asking whether life is worth living are we not putting a question that must be answered by the emotions rather than by the reason? Shall we say that it is worth living for A but not for B and that A and B must decide each for himself? Does it simply depend on individual circumstance? Concretely, is it worth while in Park Lane but not on

the Thames Embankment, worth while to the healthy and vigorous but not to the feeble and diseased, worth while so long as one basks in the sunshine but not "under a leaden sky"? The moment we consider an answer like this we are reminded that the problem of pessimism is interwoven with the most fundamental issues of morality. If you reduce the question to one of personal taste you withdraw at once the very backbone from the structure of objective ethics.

For that which pessimism denies morality assumes. That our existence has a meaning and a purpose is pre-supposed in every attempt to find out what the meaning and the purpose are. Every concrete thing that we value derives its worth from its conduciveness to a certain type of life and if life itself be valueless all subordinate valuations lose their validity. Hence if we say with the pessimists that things are fundamentally and incurably perverse there can no longer be any problem of conduct, or, to put it otherwise, the problem that remains is one to which any solution is quite as good and quite as bad as any other. Where no answer can ever be correct there is to all intents and purposes no living question.

It is true that from this position some celebrated moralists entirely dissent. The world, they argue, may still have a purpose although that purpose does not include the personal happiness of any particular individual. And '*primâ facie*' to suppose otherwise seems a ludicrous exaggeration of one's own importance. Carlyle in one of his more inhuman moods demanded to know by what authority it had been ordained that mankind should be happy: "A short time ago thou hadst not even the right to *be* at all." In our own time Von Hartmann combines with sheer

condemnation of life an uncompromising insistence on the validity of the moral judgment. And not a few followers both of the Stoic tradition in the ancient world and of the Kantian school in the modern have seen superior moral nobility in submission to the imperative of duty just where all thought of hedonistic self-interest has been either ignored or abandoned.

I think such a view fails to distinguish between psychological fact and logical justification. It would be indeed disastrous for morals if a man's conscientiousness in practical duty varied with the ebb and flow of his speculative opinions: here lies a question which it will be our task in next essay to examine in detail. But it seems to me incredible that moral effort should be left wholly unaffected by the conviction that no effort which one can possibly exert can improve except in an infinitesimal degree a world which is *ex hypothesi* incurably bad. Intellectual conclusions are by no means the sole nor even the strongest forces in life: at the same time however powerful one's emotional tendencies may be they cannot fail to be weakened if he has satisfied himself that they must in the end be nugatory. At all events I think it would be difficult to point to any great moral heroisms of the past which did not spring from a soil of faith in humanity and in its future rather than from a distrust or a despair. We are not without historical examples by which this contrast may be tested. The great pessimistic religion is Buddhism and if one compares its moral consequences with those which Christianity inspires even in its least enlightened followers one can see the moral sterility of a creed whose central virtue is resignation and whose God is the cosmic order.

If on the other hand we believe that the struggle of life is worth while however painful the way may be and however numerous the obstacles which rise in succession, this must be because somehow we are persuaded of the existence of a genuine goal and of the possibility of its attainment. What those moralists mean who speak of this goal as something to which human happiness is insignificant I confess myself unable to understand. To me no object in which this element is not included can in the slightest degree appeal, and I make bold to claim that its transcendent importance is the surest dictum of that very moral consciousness which they are at such pains to vindicate. If so, then the validity although not the existence of our ideas of duty depends on a reply of some sort being found against pessimism. To look upon the pessimist case as one for individual decision in accordance with individual circumstance is to consign the claims of morality to the same subjective criterion. And if our argument so far has been sound we have shown that, on a purely naturalistic hypothesis, if a man is temperamentally disposed to the condemnation of life there is no logic that can refute him. Whether he can be refuted on any other kind of assumption we shall next consider.

VIII

THE VALUE-JUDGMENT AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF ETHICS

"Man, so far as natural science by itself is able to teach us is no longer the final cause of the universe, the heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity science indeed as yet knows nothing. It is enough that from such beginnings famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved after infinite travail a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile and with intelligence enough to know that it is insignificant. We survey the past and see that its history is of blood and tears, of helpless blundering, of wild revolt, of stupid acquiescence, of empty aspirations. We sound the future and learn that after a period long compared with the individual life but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth tideless and inert will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit and all his thoughts will perish. The uneasy consciousness which in this obscure corner has for a brief space broken the contented silence of the universe will be at rest. Matter will know itself no longer. "Imperishable monuments" and "immortal deeds" death itself and love stronger than death will be as though they had never been. Nor will anything that *is* be better or be worse for all that the labour, genius, devotion, and suffering of man have striven through countless generations to effect."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR.

IT has become a commonplace of ethical discussion that the moralist is concerned with judgments of value, not with judgments of fact. I propose in this essay to consider in what sense this proposition is to be understood, and, if it be true, what other propositions may be deduced from it.

It is incorrect to say that the contrast in question is an original discovery of modern times. It would, in fact, be more justifiable to say that it is chiefly modern philosophers who have thought of either denying or ignoring it. In the opening chapter of Aristotle's great work the problem of ethics is formulated in a way which has never been really surpassed, and which sets forth in lucid phrase the very essence of a value-judgment. Every art, he tell us, every kind of inquiry, every act and purpose seem to aim at some good; but among these goods there are many which are desired, not for their own sake, but for the sake of something else to which they are a means. And the task of the moral philosopher is to determine what it is which is desired, not merely as a means to an end, but as an end in itself, in other words to inquire what is *intrinsically* good, what is that ultimate object of valuation by conduciveness to which everything else is valued at all. Hence, for Aristotle, in the moral judgment we always make reference to the idea of the satisfying of a need, and the quest for the chief good is the quest for the satisfaction of those needs which are the most permanent and the most fundamental.

This view is liable to an obvious objection. For it appears to draw no distinction between that which *is* desired and that which *ought* to be desired. In fact it explicitly states that we must discover what it is we ought to seek simply by analyzing carefully what it is we do seek. Different persons, as Aristotle himself immediately points out, value the most widely different things. How then shall we determine some one object or class of objects to be either good or the good unless we have some criterion of more universal authority than mere subjective valuation?

Aristotle meets the difficulty by analyzing the social nature of man, and by insisting that this is so definite and so universal as to prescribe a single hierarchy of human values correlated with man's normal faculties and activities. In doing so he clearly passes beyond the standpoint of scrutinizing and classifying actual human impulses and demands. He introduces a standard borrowed from his metaphysics by which the worth of each of these is to be tested. A thing is no longer good simply because we desire it but because it helps to develop and express our characteristic human nature.

In modern times very much the same view is advocated by that influential school whose best-known representative in England was T. H. Green. On the other hand it has been widely felt that the criterion is in the last degree vague and indefinite. The principle of self-realization seems satisfactory only until one attempts to reduce it to a detailed statement: it then appears that man has many selves, and we are so far from employing the notion of a "normal" or a "real" self to adjudicate ethically among their claims that we rather follow a sort of moral intuition to decide which is the real or normal self. It is further urged that, whether its spokesman be Aristotle or Green, the whole conception belongs to an obsolete or pagan view of life. Ancient ethics, says one writer, is contrasted with modern chiefly in this, that where the former uses the category of good the latter uses the category of right.

"The idea of *duty* is the reform that needed to be introduced into the ethical reflection of the ancient world." And the attempt to effect this improvement has undoubtedly given us a series of systems marked by great moral impressiveness.

For example, writers of the type of Samuel Clarke have claimed that the judgment "this is right" is a judgment to the correctness or incorrectness of which considerations of feeling are irrelevant. Moral truth is analogous to mathematical: the principles on which it rests are eternal and immutable: they are attested by our rational nature in the same way and with the same coerciveness as the fundamental axioms of geometry or arithmetic. I know that I have duties to my neighbour and I know in general terms what these duties are with the same immediacy and certainty of conviction with which I know that two and two make four. My reluctance to fulfil such obligations, whether it proceed from a fixed perversity of temperament, or from momentary temptations of self-interest, has no greater power to invalidate the obligations themselves than the embarrassments of a bankrupt can justify him in supposing—however much he may desire to do so—that something less than two and two will make four. For it is of the very essence of morality that it should rest not on the shifting sand of mere feeling but on the bed-rock of reason. Such a view was pushed by Kant to the extreme of paradox when he urged that the merit of a good action is greater if it be done as a cold passionless act of obedience to universal law than if it be accompanied with what is incorrectly called a "glow of *moral* enthusiasm."

This exaggeration of the place of intellect could not permanently withstand the advance of a more careful and thorough psychology.

It is indeed but one form of that intellectualist fallacy which we noticed in an earlier essay and which it has been a principal task of recent thinkers to discredit. The method of comparison has been giving

us more and more evidence of the significance of emotional states and non-rational instincts in the early stages of moral development, whether in the child or in the primitive races of mankind. One can to-day much more easily construct an argument in favour of the opposite extreme of ethical theory to that advocated by Kant. Plausible considerations are being presented in favour of the view that emotion and emotion alone is the source of what we now call the moral consciousness. I quite grant that this too is a paradox, and a much more pernicious paradox than that which it bids fair to supplant. But the one extreme is a useful counter-active to the other. If it be true—as it undoubtedly is—that the experience of moral feeling is the invariable preliminary to the growth of moral judgments, it is impossible to believe that at the stage when the power of forming the rational judgment in this sphere is reached the emotional data either cease to exist or cease to be relevant.

Considerations of this sort have led to that way of regarding the moral nature of man which expresses itself in the doctrine that the judgment of rightness or wrongness refers essentially to *aesthetic* satisfactions. When I say "this painting and this piece of music are beautiful" I record an act of valuation: and that act claims more than merely subjective validity. I do not affirm simply regarding my *individual* feeling. I mean, not only that an agreeable experience is aroused by the artistic product in me personally, but also that all other persons of a certain type of education and culture will within limits of individuality be similarly affected. And I mean still more. If some one else tells me that he derives more pleasure from the pictorial advertisement of a patent medicine

than from an old master, or from a street organ than from cathedral music, I do not merely remark that "there is no accounting for tastes": I certainly claim for my own taste a *higher value* than I allow to his. If asked wherein the superiority consists I should perhaps be at a loss to reply in terms that my questioner would understand—or, it may be, in any terms at all. But I should not on that account be shaken in my conviction that my taste is "right" and that his taste is "wrong."

Is this a true analogue of the moral judgment? Or rather is the moral judgment but one species or variety of such aesthetic valuations? I shall reserve what I have to say in answer to this question until I have drawn out at some length a conclusion which has been supposed to follow if we answer it in the affirmative. And that I may be quite fair to a position with which I have little sympathy I shall in the first instance construct as strong an argument as I can in its behalf. Let me put it as follows:—

'The recognition that in morality we are concerned with acts of aesthetic valuation guarantees for the first time the principle of the "Independence of Ethics." It was once believed that this study requires a basis in some science or sciences other than itself. It was held that unless certain propositions about the nature of man or of the world could be made good Ethics must fall to the ground. If the will is not free there can be no such thing as duty. So said T. H. Green. If there were no future state of rewards and punishments there would be no moral obligation. So apparently implied Paley. If man as a thinking being is merely the product of animal organization, if there is no spiritual principle within him, there can be no Ethics. So have argued all types of anti-mate-

rialist philosophers. But on what assumption do all their arguments rest? If a proposition A falls to the ground because another proposition B cannot be maintained this must be because A is in some fashion a deduction from B. And if Ethics stands or falls with the truth of some cosmological or anthropological speculation this implies that ethical truth is an inference from some other kind of truth.

'But'—so runs the argument—'we have already seen the judgments with which Ethics has to deal to be such that other kinds of judgments are to them irrelevant, or at all events their relevance is confined to supplying material for the moralist to work upon. We have to analyse the content of the moral consciousness to-day and we find as a result that certain types of behaviour are valued as good and certain other types are condemned as bad. In using these words good and bad we are giving an ultimate deliverance on the subject: a thing is not known to be good because it is first known to be something else from which its goodness follows as a deduction. The notion is unanalysable, irreducible to terms of anything but itself. Hence when we have made our moral valuations these valuations cannot be upset by any extension of other knowledge.

'If I call a proposition independently true I mean that it remains true no matter what may happen to other propositions. And we have always felt but we have not always been able to scientifically prove that the moral judgment is in this sense independent. We have said that honesty is the best policy but we have heartily acquiesced in the addition that "he who is honest merely because honesty is the best policy is no better than a thief." And in saying so we have meant that honesty is to be valued in and

for itself apart from any advantages that are to be gained by being honest. We distinguish penitence from remorse on the ground that the latter loses moral value by referring to the painful consequences rather than to the inherent wrongness of the offence. Our proverb bids justice be done though the heavens should fall: and it seems to be a deliverance of the moral consciousness itself that whatever view we may hold about the constitution of man now or about his destiny in the future right would still be right and wrong would still be wrong.

'In defiance of this treatises on Ethics are often prefaced by metaphysical "Prolegomena." In the absence of his first two books his others would in Green's opinion have been simply "wasted labour." This error arose from neglecting the fact that in the moral judgment we are not affirming what things *are* but rather how things *are valued*. If I am a moral agent *because* I have freedom of choice then he who can prove that I have not freedom of choice has made an end of my moral agency. Hence the validity of obligation was at the mercy of the ebb and flow of metaphysical systems, and experience shows that it could not easily be placed in a more precarious position. We should have said, on the contrary, that the moral judgment of "ought" is a statement of the *value* that the moral consciousness attaches to this particular type of behaviour. Hence there can be no refutation of it except out of the moral consciousness itself. Ethics is self-contained. There is no more reason to speak of metaphysical prolegomena to this subject than to any of the natural sciences. It is a waste of time to ask how morality is authenticated. It carries its own authentication. And those who fear evil consequences in this sphere from the progress of

certain lines of scientific inquiry are giving themselves unnecessary distress. It matters not what our ancestors once were or by what process we have come to be what we now are. Neither does it make any difference what our destiny may be. Ethics and Biology cannot collide for they move on entirely different planes.'

This argument I now propose to examine.

It has been said that extremes meet, and the proverb has abundant but largely unnoticed application to philosophical systems. For what is this but a new form of ethical intuitionism, and what thinkers would have resented more fiercely than the great historical intuitionists the notion that a man's ethical theory can remain unaffecting and unaffected by his general philosophical position? Moreover it is intuitionism of the least scientific and least defensible type.

Dr. Rashdall in his illuminating work has pointed out that in declaring morality to be a form of valuation we do not imply that virtue is the only thing that either is or ought to be valued. We call the virtuous character good, but we also call pleasure good, and knowledge, and power and many other things. We cannot have all the objects that we call good at the same time. Getting one or a few of them commonly implies giving up many others. Now on what principle am I to decide which must give place to the rest and how far they must give place? To put it concretely, if I have to do a piece of evaluation, how much honesty is worth so much pleasure or so much power? How much of the one may I sacrifice for a given quantity of the other? Or shall we say that

there is one type of value, namely virtue, in comparison with which all other values whatever shrink into insignificance ?

It seems to me that in reply to this question those who believe in the independence of ethics have nothing to say that is not hopelessly inconsistent with what they have said elsewhere. They commonly protest against the degrading nature of the difficulty I have raised. It is nothing short of an outrage, they tell us, upon one's moral sensibilities even to propound such a question as "How much honesty is worth so much power or so much pleasure?" It intrudes a commercialism that is foreign to Ethics. We should never regard it as a problem in profit and loss whether in a particular case it is worth a man's while to be moral. I can easily understand and appreciate such a point of view on the part of Reid or Dugald Stewart. For to them morality is not a matter of comparative valuation at all: ethical truth is intuitively certain, coercive to the intelligence as such. Consequently they might with perfect consistency resent and repudiate our way of putting the question. But that way arises naturally and obviously from the use of the word "value." And in asking the question so I simply desire to have it shown how and why the intrinsic worth of virtue must always outweigh the worth of other things. In common practice it seems to be assumed with deplorable frequency that the worth of other things outweighs it. I wish to be satisfied that those who so value are valuing wrongly. But as they try to show this I protest against appeal being made by the advocates of "the independence of ethics" to considerations to which moralists of some other schools have a right but to which they have no right.

In other words they have got to prove to us, without passing beyond the facts of moral valuation itself, invoking no postulates outside the phenomena of the natural order on the one side and the subjective feelings on the other, that he who rates virtue first is valuing correctly and that he who rates anything else before virtue is valuing incorrectly.

This crucial difficulty is seldom fairly faced by the advocates of "independence." I am not thinking of any single school: there are not a few in different schools who are united in their repudiation of any attempt to connect morality with postulates that pass beyond the order of nature. Some of them avow plainly that validity and invalidity are words which have no relevance to moral ideas: against these persons I am not now arguing, but only against those who believe in ethical objectivity but disown any special metaphysical foundations. The difficulty of combining these two views is to my mind insuperable: and in trying to explain to myself why that difficulty is so commonly ignored I can think of two lines of thought which serve to disguise it:—(1) The appeal to evolution, and (2) the appeal to intuitions. How far will either of these serve to clear matters up?

(1) We may think of morality as rooted in the social feelings of man: of human nature as having two main sides—a principle of self-seeking and a principle of benevolence. In terms of evolution the former is the outcome of the struggle for the individual life, the latter is the outcome of the struggle for the life of others. When tracked back to their ultimate roots the former appears as the so-called "instinct for self-preservation," the latter as the "instinct for the care of offspring." We may claim that from these two tendencies has resulted the delicate adjustment

of egoistic and altruistic sentiment which constitutes the civilized life of the modern world. And we may insist that there is no answer to the question "Why ought I to respect the rights of others?" except by way of appeal to the fundamental fact of sympathy as an element in human nature.

My difficulty with this reply is that it is a reply to an entirely different question from that which I asked. I feel no doubt that sympathy is present as a moving force in life. But what I observe is that it is present in the most varying degrees in different persons and even in the same person at different times: and what I wish to know is the authority by which anyone declares that it ought ever to be present in a degree other than that in which it actually is present.

Granted that I am the outcome of two opposing forces, a set of egoistic and a set of altruistic impulses. Suppose—of course mathematical proportions are not literally meant—suppose that the egoistic impulses are in my case related to the altruistic as 2 to 1. Suppose that in your case they are related as 1 to 2.

Ethics undoubtedly affirms that there is a standard or norm by which the proportions *should* be regulated, and that the existing proportions are not, simply because they *are* the existing proportions, to be approved. It even declares that in no single case are the existing proportions absolutely correct. And if they are not correct this must be because they deviate from some ideal that is correct. But if Ethics be, in the sense which we have described, independent, this ideal must be discovered not by reference to anything outside but merely by more careful interrogation of the moral consciousness itself

taken in conjunction with the facts of the natural order.

Now the interrogation of the moral consciousness if we mean by this simply the discovery of the way in which impulses and ends are valued yields results that are indefinitely variable. For in each case the result depends on the personal history, the education, the accidents of birth and environment of the individual. If anthropological research has proved anything at all it has proved that the moral sentiments actually entertained by mankind are closely correlated with such differences. Consequently if an objective standard is to be set up it must come not from mere inspection of what these sentiments are but from some outside principle which decides among them.

Such an outside principle has been sought in the consideration that certain impulses minister to the good and well-being of the race while others oppose it. There are those which make for racial life and those which make for racial death. But obviously the extent to which the individual is influenced by the consideration of the good of the species will itself depend on the respective strength of his egoistic and altruistic impulses.

What then can be said from the point of view we are now considering to him who happens in the course of the evolution process to have been born with a minimum endowment of altruistic impulse? Can you show him that his actions are unreasonable? Can you in any way vindicate to him on rational grounds the superiority of a different type of behaviour? You tell him that he is the enemy of society: he replies that he doesn't care so long as he is his own friend. You tell him that you value

honesty more highly than any material gain. He replies that your taste is in his opinion peculiar and that he sees no right on your part to impose it on him. You tell him that his conscience must in the end accuse him and he replies that that is to a great extent a matter of arrangement and that his conscience has been reduced to admirable subjection. You tell him that the excesses of his mode of life are ruining his constitution, and he replies with perfect truth that one may quite well overstep to a great extent the limits of what you call rightness without suffering any serious penalty. In any case he has decided in favour of a short life and a merry one.

The naturalistic moralist would, I think, go away feeling that the scoundrel with whom he had been arguing was wrong but that it was very difficult for anyone without deserting naturalistic ethics to show why he was wrong. And I think he would have an impression that his difficulties were those of a man who is trying to prove that which is self-evidently or axiomatically true. If we try to formulate this in scientific language we are making use of the second of those expedients which I mentioned a few pages earlier, I mean the "appeal to intuitions." It would run thus:

(2) The reason why we cannot justify the imperativeness of duty is that we are dealing with an ultimate fact of our nature, and if an ultimate could be justified it would thereby cease to be ultimate. We cannot ask the question "Why?" for ever. We reach a point at which we must simply accept a situation, not seek to explain or to analyse further. And he who takes up the scoundrel's point of view does not really mean what he says. He is aware just as much as we are that duty is obligatory:

what he means if he were speaking the truth is, not that he is in doubt as to what he should do, or at all events, in doubt that there is something that he should do, but rather that he has made up his mind not to do it. For it is a fact of the ultimate constitution of human nature that right is right or as we prefer to put it that the value of virtue is greater than the value of anything else whatsoever. There are, as Henry Sidgwick[1] pointed out, three axioms of behaviour which can no more be proved than one can prove that two and two make four, viz. the axiom of Prudence declaring that one ought to seek his own good, the axiom of Benevolence declaring that one ought to seek the good of others, and the axiom of Justice declaring that no man's good is intrinsically more valuable than the good of his fellow.

I entirely agree that there are such moral "first truths," irreducible and indemonstrable. Every attempt to prove them turns out either not to have proved them at all or to have assumed them in the course of "proof." If you grant him these the moralist can go on to demonstrate not a few other propositions: without these he is as helpless as a geometrician to whom you refuse to concede at the outset that if equals be added to equals the sums are also equal. But I must argue that he who believes in moral axioms has by implication struck at the very root of the principle of the "independence of ethics." For one cannot say at the same time that the moral consciousness is nothing but a set of emotional reactions, and also

[1] I do not of course suggest that the *general* view discussed in this paragraph would have been endorsed by Sidgwick. On the contrary he was one of the most clear-sighted critics of the claim that Ethics can be independent and that its content is emotional.

that it requires for its basis at least a trio of truths intuitively known. No one so far as I know has yet been bold enough to speak of "emotions intuitively valid": but some such extraordinary conception must be in the mind of those who use alternately the language of Hume and the language of Reid.

They have admitted that a set of axioms of valuation is objectively and coercively true: these truths are superior to all variations of impulse: they are unaffected by any peculiarities of individual feeling and by the neglect or forgetfulness of the moral agent. Morality is thus not merely our way of looking at the world; it is rooted in "the nature of things." Not only do we think virtue to be the object of highest value, it actually is so whether we think it or not and he who thinks otherwise thinks wrongly. For in speaking of objective truth we surely mean that corresponding to the inward affirmation there is outward fact which the affirmation does not make but finds.

Now in what way must we conceive this outward moral fact to exist? In the same way surely as we conceive objectivity on the intellectual plane. Science proceeds only on the assumption of a rational universe: its success means everywhere the correct response of reason within to reason without. And, conversely, scientific scepticism is the inevitable outcome of supposing that the rationality which is active in thought is not also immanent in things. We are similarly bound in the moral sphere either to be utterly sceptical about moral differences or to assume that the universe is the manifestation of morality not less than the manifestation of reason. In accepting geometrical axioms we commit ourselves to certain

doctrines about space, meaning thereby, not simply our spatial concepts, but space as existing whether we conceive it at all or not: so too in accepting moral axioms we affirm about a world which is not a mere arrangement or combination of subjective feelings. If the distinctions we draw between right and wrong, good and evil, are distinctions objectively valid this must be because somehow these distinctions are not matters of indifference to that Power which the universe reveals. The objectivity of the moral judgment means moral order and purpose at the heart of things.

But if we say this we have denied the principle of the "independence" of ethics. The essence of that position is that the moralist must not lean upon any kind of cosmic speculation. His system must be self-sustaining: it must be unaffected by any changes in general philosophic theory. The truths which it contains must not in any sense depend for their validity on truths borrowed from other departments of knowledge. If the argument of the preceding paragraph be correct we can purchase this independence only at the cost of admitting moral philosophy to be nothing more than a branch of psychology. Interest would no doubt still belong to the comparative study of these no less than of other emotions which are found to exist amongst men. A man's ideas of good and evil would remain as well worth studying as his racial characteristics or the peculiarities of his language. Curious scientists would want to contrast eastern and western types of 'morality' just as much and as long as they want to contrast facial angles and brain convolutions. But they must discard as words without meaning all questions about objective rightness or about a single standard of

conduct by which lower standards are to be judged.

I do not personally believe that this theory of the emotional origin of the moral judgment can ever long survive when once its logical import has been realized. It is a highly beneficent provision of nature that many of our convictions remain practically undisturbed in our minds long after we have embraced principles which are logically fatal to those convictions. There is happily no law of our nature necessitating us the moment we have persuaded ourselves that something is true to uproot immediately and violently every previous opinion which cannot consort with the newcomer. If we were thus ruled by logic our instability would become intolerable. Transformations in thought are mercifully gradual, and the theoretical reason determines in only a very partial degree the convictions which we cherish. The reader will recall the vivid picture which Mr. Balfour has drawn of a State whose citizens had made up their minds to be thoroughgoing in their devotion to reason alone. He writes:

> 'So might we imagine the members of our emancipated community discussing the principles upon which morality is founded. But in truth it were a vain task to try and work out in further detail the results of an experiment which, human nature being what it is, can never be seriously attempted. That it can never be seriously attempted is not, be it observed, because it is of so dangerous a character that the community in its wisdom would refuse to embark upon it. This would be a frail protection indeed. Not the danger of the adventure but its impossibility is our security. To reject all convictions which

are not the products of free speculative investigation is, fortunately, an exercise of which humanity is in the strictest sense incapable.'[1]

Only in the light of some such principle as Mr. Balfour here indicates can I understand the respect which is still paid to morality by writers whose criticism if it were sound would have destroyed every shadow of claim which morality now urges to the homage of mankind. They simply decline to recognize the upshot of the doctrines which they have espoused. The impulse to be logically consistent is only one of many impulses which take a share in determining opinion: and it may easily be, for a time at all events, among the weaker of these impulses. Prof. Westermarck has exhibited with immense anthropological learning how various have been the feelings with which different races have regarded the virtue of veracity. He has proved to his own complete satisfaction, that such varieties of moral sentiment imply an emotional as contrasted with a rational origin for our moral ideas. And it is in his view a main task of comparative psychology to discredit the notion of a single, immutable moral system discoverable and defensible by reason. Yet Prof. Westermarck has I feel sure no real doubt that it is a man's duty to speak the truth, that this duty does not rise or fall with changes in racial feeling regarding it, and that it is as little impaired in validity by the contempt with which it is regarded on the Gold Coast as it is strengthened by the admiration which it excites among the Tonga Islanders. He attaches, I am sure, in the last analysis the same authority to the statement "It is right to be honest and just" as is attached to that statement by the most rationalizing of moralists:

[1] "Foundations of Belief," p. 200.

and he is just as little disturbed in that conviction as is anyone else by the recollection that in Fiji and among the Matabele the verdict of moral feeling is against him. And indeed it could scarcely be otherwise. It is psychologically impossible to escape from a moral as from a scientific axiom. No man who really understood what the words mean has ever doubted that two straight lines are incapable of enclosing a space. And there are first truths of morality which remain coercive to the mind no matter what moral theory we have adopted. Consequently since the days of Protagoras the validity of the moral consciousness has survived all its theoretical refutations.

To pursue this line of thought is however not our present task. We set out to inquire what is involved in speaking of the moral judgment as a "proposition of value." We noticed that one of the things alleged to be involved in this is the principle known as "the independence of ethics." And we have seen reason to suppose that if this principle is really involved in the Value-Judgment theory then that theory is destructive of moral objectivity. If then we are not prepared to admit that in morality we have the mere play of subjective emotions we must either say that the Value-Judgment way of looking at ethics is wrong or that it does not involve ethical independence.

It is the second alternative which I adopt. A statement of value though it involves feeling involves or may involve much more than feeling. Mr. Bradley has shown once for all that the ultimate subject in every judgment is Reality, and that the purpose of every judgment is to affirm some attribute or attributes about the real. I can if I choose make my own emotional state the "subject" in the

grammatical sense of that term: if I do then what I affirm is that Reality includes amongst other attributes that of exciting in me, in the reference specified, such and such particular feeling. But unless I expressly say so my judgment is never to be understood in this subjective sense. A judgment of perception affirms not regarding my individual perceptual image but regarding the real outer thing to which that image refers. And, as we saw a few pages back, even in the judgment of taste where the subjective element seems to be most conspicuous an objective validity of some sort is claimed. The beautiful is clearly a value-notion: yet we insist that in some sense a "false" is to be distinguished from a "true" taste; but the contrast of truth and falsity can have no meaning whatever unless intellectual as well as emotional factors are involved. It was the purpose of Kant in the third of his Critiques to determine in what sense objectivity may be attributed to the aesthetic consciousness and he rightly emphasizes that if and in so far as it has a title to objectivity it must be rational in its origin. Surely the argument is stronger still for that species of value-judging which constitutes morality. There is an immense difference between saying that a judgment *involves* a feeling and saying that it is a judgment *about* that feeling: and the attempt to prove the contrary is as inconclusive as the argument of Hobbes that, since thought cannot proceed in the absence of particular imagery, it is of such particular imagery alone that thought is composed.

What then in detail are those postulates regarding the cosmic order which seem to be necessarily involved if the moral judgment is to be valid?

It seems to me that the primary postulate is

theism. I can attach as little meaning to an objective moral order which does not reside in or at least involve a Personal Consciousness as I can attach to the objective impersonal reason of Heracleitos or of Hegel. And if such a view is called "anthropomorphic" I reply that it is so only in the same sense in which anthropomorphism infects all our thinking and certainly not least our scientific concepts. In using the words reason and rational we are thinking of mind, and the only material out of which we can construct our notion of 'Mind Universal' consists of those human minds that we know. The moment we begin to use such a term abstracting from implications which belong to the forms of our human consciousness we begin to cheat ourselves with phrases. And we merely increase the delusion by using capital letters or by declaring in a spirit of spurious devoutness that the Supreme Reason is, "no doubt, *more than* personal." Rational process torn apart from volitional and emotional concomitants is nothing whatever but an abstraction which we have no title to substantiate. The dethroning of this monster of the Hegelian imagination is, as we noticed in a previous essay, one of the conspicuous services which recent psychology has rendered to the cause of clear thinking. And if it is in the end contradictory to speak of reason as an attribute of any other than a personal consciousness it is doubly so to speak in such terms of morality.

In the second place, the argument of Kant seems to me to remain still unshaken when he declared that in the absence of the postulate of immortality it was impossible to vindicate the moral consciousness. And when Kant spoke of immortality he meant what he said, therein differing notably from some writers

who are confusing us by employing the same word to-day.

He was not thinking of that invaluable privilege which they are willing to concede to the human spirit "to share, in so far as it is worthy, in the immortality of the All": nor of that gratification of our vanity which we are allowed to anticipate in posthumous fame, an object which all agree to be somewhat unworthy while we are here but which acquires a refined worth when we are gone: nor yet of that re-incarnation over and over again in a sort of Orphic cycle of births and deaths which yields such satisfaction to the mind of a recent fantastic school. What difference is there except a verbal one between denying immortality altogether and affirming it only in the sense in which matter is indestructible, or in the sense that when one is gone his friends will continue to talk about him, or in the sense that when any man dies someone else is immediately born?

Kant at least was no juggler with words. And surely, at all events if we are theists, his case is conclusive.

I shall at once be reminded that there is historical evidence against this necessity of connexion between belief in theism and belief in immortality. The Jews have combined a singularly pure and elevated faith in a personal God with a view of man and his destiny in which survival of death has at all events no important place. But in arguing that one belief involves another I do not mean that everyone who holds the first holds also the second. The affirmation of immortality is not an element which can be found by psychological analysis in the affirmation of theism. But who, for example, would adduce against the Utilitarian system of ethics the obvious fact that in

the mind of the average man there is no conscious or explicit reference at the moment of a moral decision to the "greatest happiness of the greatest number"? John Stuart Mill pointed out that the Bible might be the only valid rule of life even though a man has not time in an emergency to read through the whole of the Old and New Testaments, and that the dependence of navigation upon Astronomy is not disproved by the circumstance that a sailor in a storm cannot sit down to calculate the Nautical Almanac.

What I am speaking of is not the psychological content but the logical implication of affirming an objective moral order and in particular of affirming that the world is the expression of the purposes of a Moral Person. Can anyone who, amid those abounding difficulties which I by no means minimize, has accepted such a point of view, really believe that the strivings of the moral life in man will in such a universe be permitted to end in failure? And is there any way in which they can be saved from failure if we exclude a future state? Those, and they are not few, who find no point in such a question are, I believe, as a rule, persons whose career has not been of the strenuous type, whose lot has been cast in conventional comfort, and whose imagination is not sufficiently active to bring before them any sort of experience which is in sharp contrast with their own. It is intensely true that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives. And even those who do not know and who make no attempt to find out might see in the work of such anti-theistic writers as Von Hartmann enough to stimulate a very different way of thinking. When theism and when immortality are abandoned by a philosopher who realizes the moral struggle of humanity pessimism is never

far off. Life has become tragic precisely in so far as it is heroic.

The moral postulate of a future state is profoundly misunderstood by those who, with some coarseness of thought, represent it in the light of a commercial transaction. It is sometimes dismissed as a product of "other-worldliness": and the man who insists upon it is reproached for ignoble bargaining. Surely, it is urged, a higher moral standpoint is taken by those who believe in duty for duty's sake than by him who thinks that the policy of a virtuous life is going to pay either here or hereafter.

These critics seem, if I may say so, just a little self-conscious, when one remembers that the most sublime moral heroisms that history records have been associated with the names of men who have lived in "the faith of the world to come."

> "Thou madest man, he knows not why,
> He thinks he was not made to die,
> And Thou hast made him, Thou art just."

Is this mercenary? Is this a spirit of profit and loss? Is it not rather the attempt of reflection to avoid saying at one and the same time that God is just and that a world which is, so far as we can see, incurably unjust is the complete expression of His will for man? A great living novelist and one who is no sympathizer with the quest for immortality has coined in another reference an epigram which is not inappropriate: "Such morality though it may be good enough for deities is not good enough for me."

Not *in order* that he may be rewarded is the virtuous man virtuous: the thought of rewards and compensations may be as far from his mind as the thought of nourishing the body is absent when he obeys the impulse of hunger. He acts immediately

and spontaneously: but if the hero and the villain are alike approaching the same goal of extinction at which when they reach it the contrast of their characters will become entirely and even absurdly insignificant, then whatever else may be said of the cosmic scheme in which this has for countless generations been taking place the one thing that can *not* be said of it is that it is in any sense morally directed.

For this view I venture to claim that the history of philosophical systems provides some confirmation. Genuine theism has not often—though I grant that it has occasionally—been divorced from the expectation of a future state. To illustrate in detail would take me too far beyond the scope of this present essay. There is, I think, no metaphysical standpoint from which belief in immortality ceases to be possible and from which at the same time—for those who can think out consequences clearly to the end—short work is not made of moral distinctions. It will invariably be found that he who combines such cosmic speculation with a genuine recognition of the moral order does so by introducing unconsciously in the process of his thought some notion borrowed illegitimately and inconsistently from elsewhere.

These considerations have an obvious bearing on the problem which we found so intractable in our last chapter. We attempted then to decide the question of the value of life without making any reference to postulates which carry us beyond the facts of the natural order of the world. And we found that the cheery optimist to whom life is "of course" worth living is likely to have a rude awakening as soon as he tries to construct an argument for saying so and still more as soon as he tries to meet

the arguments on the other side. We saw that any one with sufficient imagination to realize in anything like an adequate way the pain, the disorder, and the moral evil of the world will hesitate to say that in its present state it is worth preserving. And we saw that a personal question of the highest gravity arises if we take up the standpoint not of the more fortunate classes to whom the problem is merely speculative but of those who are actually engulfed in the pain the disorder and the crime. We saw that for a very large proportion of our race if they are temperamentally disposed to be pessimists there is no logic which can refute them. We then raised the question whether the value of life might not be quite satisfactorily left as a matter of taste and of individual feeling, but we quickly saw that this involved the abandonment of objective morals. The vindication of the moral consciousness depends on a reply to pessimism being found.

In this paper we have been confronted with the same problem from a different point of view. We assumed rightness and wrongness to be expressions of value: and arguing from the same presuppositions as before we found morality crumbling away in our hands. But when one discovers that he has refuted an axiom it is high time for him to go back on his assumptions, especially when as in this case the assumptions have no justification except the encrusted prejudice of an age which insists on believing only in what it sees. If we frankly abandon these presuppositions, accepting not only the moral axioms but those principles to which the axioms conduct us we find, not indeed that our difficulties are at an end, but that we have on our hands merely difficulties which may by increasing knowledge be explained,

not contradictions which new knowledge can only darken and deepen. And as it is with faith in a moral order so it is with faith in the value of life. Despite his relentless logic we feel that the pessimist is arguing a paradox. Though we cannot reply to him we disbelieve him. But to leave the case so is not a satisfactory attitude to adopt towards it. If the pessimist has really landed us in paradox we are entitled to reconsider the assumptions that we granted him at the outset. We did well to grant them that we might see where they were going to lead. And having seen them lead to a result in which theory and practice are in irreconcilable conflict we must now revoke and re-examine them. Those same postulates about the World-Scheme by which the sanctions of morality are restored will be found to invest life with a meaning and a value. It is not so much that any single item in the black series which we lately passed in review has been removed: it is rather that the whole has been transfigured. We shall not if we are wise exaggerate the extent to which the situation has been explained. We shall not empty the word good of all significance by attempting to prove that everything is good. We shall frankly confess that the pain the disorder and the crime of the world are not good but evil, and we shall be rightly intolerant of any theory which affirms a higher plane of thought from which moral distinctions are discovered to be an illusion. But even as our consciousness of moral corruption has not disturbed but rather intensified our belief in objective moral truth so our very awareness of the insignificance of life becomes a token of its ultimate greatness. That evolution-process from which we could extract such illusory encouragement so long as we conceived our-

selves but as links in an endless chain becomes endowed with a new meaning. When seen *sub specie aeternitatis* the perspective is altered and the values are transformed. Not on this nor on any other hypothesis can we read all the riddles. But that naturalistic assumption which derives its strength mainly from its fraudulent pretence to clear the world of its mysteries must be followed out to its own wholly unintelligible consequence. And he who believes that in the moral consciousness is to be found the surest bed-rock of truth upon which our finite nature can rely will realize that no other scheme of things can be quite so impossible for man as that which reduces his moral convictions to a hallucination or a dream.

IX

THE CULT OF NIETZSCHE

"Unter allen diesen Erschwerungen aus den Wortverhüllungen den positiven Gedankenkern herauszuschälen, wäre eine fast aussichtslose Arbeit, wenn dieser Gedankenkern reich, vielseitig und umfassend wäre. Aber die Sache wird dadurch erleichtert, dass er so sehr arm und eng ist, und sich auf ein paar dürftige Gedanken zurückführen lässt, die in den verschiedenartigsten Wendungen immer neu variiert werden. Die Armut seines Gedankengehalts wäre in einer methodischen und systematischen Darstellung sofort zu Tage getreten und konnte sich nur hinter einer aphoristischen Gestreichelei verbergen, die immer wie die Katze um den heissen Brei herumgeht und dabei zierliche oder groteske Sprünge macht." [1]

SUCH is the somewhat disrespectful language in which Nietzsche's brilliant countryman, Edouard von Hartmann, sums up the difficulties and the facilities which attend the interpretation of the "Neue Moral." That disdain of system and cultivation of epigram which have raised their hero in the eyes of his admirers from the level of a mere reasoner to the level of a seer, are viewed in this passage in a less flattering light. Nor does it seem to have occurred to von Hartmann that it was possible to

[1] "Ethische Studien," pp. 35, 36.

make a merit out of the very multitude of inconsistencies and unresolved paradoxes to which the Nietzschean enthusiast in this country points with pride in his master's work.

To contradict oneself used to be a special privilege of the Hegelians: but even they thought it necessary to make constant reference to a higher synthesis in which somehow the contradiction was overcome. The conflicting theses only appeared to conflict: they were really, when regarded from a more advanced standpoint, but moments in a larger thought. This expedient was not always very satisfying in practice: recourse was had to it so often that the profane began to speak of it as a *deus ex machina* for a Hegelian in difficulties: at the same time it was a sort of homage to the popular prejudice in favour of consistency. And there is still a feeling that a system cannot be quite right if it be possible to contradict almost every principle it contains with another principle which it contains somewhere else. But this attitude of mind, like most of the things that had been thought or felt by any of his predecessors, was despised by Nietzsche and is still lightly esteemed by his followers. The bold brandishing of contradictory opinions is, it seems, one of his peculiar glories. Hence it appears fitting to speak of the Nietzschean movement as a cult, for it has but little resemblance to a set of reasoned and considered opinions. If one may adapt a phrase from Max Nordau it is a piece of "*fin-de-siècle* thinking" with a vengeance.

I think it is unlikely that Nietzsche's contribution to ethical thought will reach in great Britain any considerable vogue. He counts apparently for a good deal with some sections of his own countrymen: here he counts for nothing at all. British philosophy if it

has not always been original and if it has sometimes been stolid has generally been sane: and to us the interest of this school is mainly pathological. But as a few of its representatives have become recently energetic I propose in this paper to consider some of those Nietzschean opinions which they accuse us of having unduly neglected.

I

I begin with the conception of the Superman. No one denies that it has elements of value: but in those aspects in which it is valuable it is no original discovery of Friedrich Nietzsche. There is a sense however in which it is peculiarly his own, and in that sense it appear to me to be as unsound and as repulsive as anything can be.

The doctrine of the Superman is an assertion of the worth of physical well-being and of the fierce joy of physical life; it is a protest against the unhealthy perversions of the ascetic ideal, against that notion of sainthood which makes everything earthly seem valueless or worse. It is a call to grapple with preventable evils and a reproach to the morbid otherworldliness which remains apathetic to the woes of life, making its insignificance an excuse for its squalor and misery. It suggests moreover a thought which those who have forgotten their Plato sometimes call "peculiarly modern"—I mean the responsibility of each generation for those who are to be their successors. This is a burden which increases with every increase in our acquaintance with the laws of life. We know more fully to-day than men ever knew before the extent to which the physical and material well-being of posterity is under our control.

With every advance, provided it is not one of purely theoretical interest, in physiology, in sociology, in economics, in any science which illumines any region of man's life our responsibility for the next generation becomes more serious and complex. But these are among the trite commonplaces of ethical thought, and it was scarcely for their sake that Nietzsche has burdened our philosophical vocabulary with a new word. He has a theory of his own which the word is to symbolize. The point is clearly indicated in this famous passage:—

> I teach you beyond man. Man is a something that shall be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass him?
>
> All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and are ye going to be the ebb of this great tide and rather revert to the animal than surpass man?
>
> What with man is the ape? A joke or a sore shame. Man shall be the same for beyond-man, a joke or a sore shame.[1]

In other words, everything exists for the sake of something higher and better than itself, and its characteristic excellence is constituted by the efficiency with which it subserves this end. To this rule man can be no exception—his value is found in the extent to which he prepares the way and hastens the coming of Superman.

The idea that nature has throughout a purpose—whatever that purpose may be—is curiously incongruous with things that Nietzsche has said elsewhere. Any such admission is bound to bring one into difficulties when he tries to combine it with a thorough-going atheism. And if Nietzsche had not

[1] "Thus spake Zarathustra" (Eng. Transl. by Tille), I. 3.

been so scornful of the great anti-theistic writers that preceded him as to neglect altogether to find out what they said he would have found that they avoided at least this incoherence. But the really notable point in the passage is that the fact of moral obligation is interpreted by reference to a purpose wholly extrinsic to the moral agent. My duty is to subserve an end in which I personally am to have no share—an end in the furtherance of which I am to be simply used up. I am a mere means, a "bridge" as Nietzsche elsewhere picturesquely puts it, to "beyond-man."

This way of defining the moral goal is perfectly clear and simple. Anyone can understand the distinction between that which is a means to an end and that which is an end-in-itself. A piece of machinery is admirable so long as it does its work well: as soon as it has outlasted its efficiency, or as soon as something else is invented which will do the work better the old machinery is "scrapped." Whether this stage has been reached is to be determined from the point of view of the man who owns the engine and for whose purposes it is employed. The dynamo generates electricity to drive the city trams: and we hope that as we have experience of one type of dynamo after another we shall discover new models which will make it worth while to discard the old ones. An electrical appliance is "something that shall be surpassed": each appliance in turn leads on to the "creation of something beyond itself," and in such surpassing and such creating the energies of many scientists are absorbed. But the whole process of improving upon and casting aside our old mechanical servants is justified by the consideration that the only value these instruments have lies in their

power of ministering to the comfort and convenience of those human beings whom science itself exists to serve.

Surely however we are offered the argument from analogy run mad when we are asked to say that humanity ought to be willing and eager to *scrap itself* in the interests of some sort of creature higher than humanity whose coming may thus be accelerated. *Cui bono?* Let us be thoroughgoing with our analogy. It is urgently desirable, it seems, that man should pave the way for Superman even as it was a memorable achievement on the part of the ape to have paved the way for man. But was it really so from the ape's point of view? If, despite the pessimist, we think the emergence of human life upon this planet to have been on the whole a good thing we must mean good as considered from the human side. Especially in an atheistic scheme of things there is no other alternative: for it becomes impossible to speak of a Creator whose glory is displayed in the unfolding series. But if we are in earnest with Nietzsche's principle it was a privilege also for the ape to be precisely the link that he was in the chain of evolution; it was the ape's solemn duty if he had been capable of appreciating it, to make haste in evolving a higher species which might congratulate itself on the extent to which it had left behind the highest attainments of its self-sacrificing ancestors.

Nor is there any attempt to minimize the extent to which we must be willing to immolate ourselves in this great cause of Superhumanity. Everything that stands in the way of Natural Selection must be swept aside: and in Nietzsche's opinion nothing stands so much in the way as that sympathy which leads to the succouring of the weak and the diseased. I suppose

there is no element in our modern civilization which most of us would be so unwilling to uproot as that in which philanthropy and charity have found increasing expression in recent times. This is the first thing that must go: for to speed the Superman is not only one duty but the whole duty of the present generation.

"The weak and ill-constituted shall perish: first principle of *our* charity. And people shall help them to do so. Sympathy thwarts on the whole the law of development which is the law of selection. . . . Nothing in our unsound modernism is unsounder than Christian charity."

Now surely there is a fundamental distinction which in all this is ignored—the distinction between a purpose existing *in* me and a purpose existing *for* me. I may be a mere tool in the hands of some other being: but you cannot at the same time degrade me to the level of a tool and call upon me to show the enthusiasm of a person. For those creatures which are here only that they may further an end beyond themselves there neither is nor can be any such thing as morality. But with the emergence of a rational self-consciousness we must have resort to new categories to describe its life. Only anti-theological prejudice can prevent us from seeing that one means very different types of obligation when one says "A caterpillar ought to turn into a chrysalis" and "A man ought to support his children."

It is precisely in that respect in which man *differs* from the rest of the universe—the respect namely of being an end-in-himself—that we find the nerve of the moral life. Legislation which is imposed from without may coerce: only self-legislation can enlist the energies of the unconstrained will. And after all it

makes small difference whether the being in whose behoof one is required to sacrifice himself and his fellows—especially his weaker fellows—be conceived as a Greek τύραννος, or an Oriental god, or a sort of deified human savage projected into the distant future and named "the Superman." In any case we are asked to bow our necks once more to that heteronomy of the will from which we believed that Kant had set us free. The ideal set before us is related in a purely external way to the life which it is to control. The good at which I am to aim ceases to be *my* good.

But, since "Immoralist" is one of the titles by which Nietzsche was in the habit of describing himself, it may be said that I have not convicted him of any inconsistency. It is not strange that the denial of moral obligation should be involved in the position of one who has written direct polemics against that very idea. I grant it: but I complain that he does not carry out his denial in a systematic or coherent fashion. Like so many other persons who have set out to destroy ethics he has simply set up an ethic of his own. For he admonishes us to do something, and if he does not use the word duty in regard to it he makes it evident that to those who refuse to do what he asks he will apply his copious vocabulary of foul language. It is idle to juggle with words: Whatever authority other persons attribute to the claims of justice, benevolence and mercy, that Nietzsche attributes to the call that is made upon us by the vision of Superman. If he has really invalidated the conception of moral obligation he may not appeal to it, even though he give it a new name, to sanction his own ideals. The eloquence of Zarathustra can stir only those who have not grasped Zarathustra's metaphysic. If I am a mere link in an endless chain,

a member in a series whose existence is without intrinsic value but justified only by the preparation it makes for the member that is to come then nothing could be more absurd than to attempt to kindle in me a moral enthusiasm. So far from rising to a high calling I must sink to my appropriate degradation. "Duty for duty's sake" is a phrase in an unknown tongue to one who understands himself as a mere product of a ruthless cosmic struggle and who knows that nature cares nought for him. Consequently he who says that Nietzsche has not destroyed but merely revised or re-interpreted the notion of obligation is dealing not in meanings but only in words.

This doctrine of Superman which thus seems to bristle with inconsistencies was in its author's opinion a stroke of exceptional genius even for him. He tells us that if he had not forsworn all superstition he would have looked upon it as a special revelation from heaven. It seems a pity that he could not adore himself as a divine favourite and the custodian of a secret from on high without compromising in a measure that originality which must owe nothing to either God or man. In another mood, and especially if the conception had been launched by someone else, I can easily imagine the fury with which Nietzsche might have attacked it. For how could anyone, and above all how could Friedrich Nietzsche think so meanly of himself as to play the part of a mere instrument? It would be easy to compose a declamation against "man as means" on the model of Zarathustra's famous refutation of theism. "To lay bare to you, friends, my inmost heart, *if* there were gods how could I bear not to be a god? Therefore there are no gods." Surely his ambition has fallen far when he is satisfied to be a "bridge."

II

If we are going to trample upon the impulses of sympathy and charity it is clear that our moral nature must be turned upside down. And this is exactly what Nietzsche wished to do. His aim was a complete "Transvaluation of Values": which in plain English means that although mankind have in the past thought highly of the Christian virtues they must now be taught to think otherwise.

In particular we must unlearn the delusion about the equality of all men and about the justice of equal rights. Nothing has contributed more to the decadence of the race than the rise of the democratic spirit. Nietzsche believed with Lord Curzon that all true civilization has been the work of aristocracies: and he would willingly have added with Mr. Churchill that the support of aristocracies has been the burden of all civilizations. The point where his doctrine seems really unique is his conviction that the maintenance of a superior caste is the proper and indeed the sole function of a community.

> "There are only three respects in which the masses appear to me to deserve a glance:—first as blurred copies of great men, executed on bad paper and from worn-out plates; secondly as opposition to the great; and lastly as instruments of the great: for the rest let them go to the devil and to statistics."

And again:—

> "A good and sound aristocracy . . . accepts with a good conscience the sacrifice of innumerable men who for its sake must be depressed and reduced to incomplete men, slaves, instruments.

> Its fundamental belief must be that society has a right to exist, not for the sake of society but only as the substructure and scaffolding on which a select species of beings may rise to their higher mission and in general to a higher existence."[1]

The democracy may perhaps be excused if it cannot see the point of this. But it is not to the democracy that Nietzsche makes his appeal. He thinks it quite possible that no one has yet been born of artistic sensitiveness sufficiently refined to be worthy of his esoteric doctrine. But they will yet appear: "it is only the day after to-morrow that belongs to me; these alone are my readers, my pre-determined readers; of what account are the rest? The rest are merely mankind."

And for those who are merely mankind Nietzsche will allow a sort of provisional usefulness to the current valuations. For there are two moralities, a master-morality and a slave-morality. The great are related to the common as the herdsman to the herd: and the herd has a kind of ignoble virtue of which the herdsman will make use but which he will not degrade himself by imitating.

"The whole of the morality of Europe is based upon the values *which are useful to the herd.*" The origin of truthfulness for example is thus indicated:

> "Thou shalt be recognizable, thou shalt express thy inner nature by means of clear and constant signs—otherwise thou art dangerous: and supposing thou art evil, thy power of dissimulation is absolutely the worst thing for the herd. We despise the secretive and those whom we cannot identify.—*Consequently*

[1] "Beyond Good and Evil." Quoted by Prof. Pringle-Pattison in *Contemporary Review*, May, 1898.

thou must regard thyself as recognizable, thou mayest not remain *concealed* from thyself, thou mayest not even believe in the possibility of thy ever *changing*."[1]

This slave-morality which is all that the mass of men are capable of must be nurtured by the great in much the same way in which a Roman noble and a South American planter encouraged the virtues of loyalty and obedience in the ergastulum and on the estate. But the master-morality is something wholly different. "We scholars" and "we immoralists" have "our virtues." These comprise in a word all that self-assertiveness and scorn for every interest but our own which mankind have so far agreed to call vices. A complete transvaluation is wanted. And above all we must eliminate in our emancipated community all trace of those slave morals which we owe to the blighting influence of the Christian religion. From it have arisen the effeminacy, the maudlin sentiment, the cowardice by which degenerate Europe is marked to-day. "Christianity is mainly responsible for the deterioration of the European race."

I have quoted directly from translations of Nietzsche's works lest the reader who is unfamiliar with his opinions should suppose I was exaggerating or distorting. In truth Nietzsche was a man whose thought it would be impossible to caricature. It is shown at its worst when reported in his own frenzied language, and I feel that I ought to apologize for taking it seriously. It is difficult for the English reader to believe that the views we have just summarized were intended otherwise than as a joke, or perhaps as a burlesque on philosophical arguments in general. But the disciples of the cult take them-

[1] "The Will to Power" (Transl. edited by O. Levy), vol. i. pp. 228, 229.

selves very seriously indeed: and some writers who are by no means disciples—for example Mr. A. W. Benn—are ready after riddling Nietzsche with criticism to observe that he was a "truly ethical genius." Hence we must ask what there is in the point of view we have here outlined which is of the slightest value for moral reflection.

I suppose that it is in the end impossible to impart the germ of moral ideas to those who are entirely devoid of them. If instead of writing books to show that justice and benevolence are morally inferior to rapacity and self-seeking, Nietzsche had written in support of the thesis "that two straight lines may and frequently do enclose a space": and if he had developed this in an aphoristic style with much unsavoury language about everyone who disagreed I cannot form the slightest idea of the kind of refutation which one would be called upon to offer. To him who cannot see that one man ought never to be treated as a mere instrument or tool for the aggrandizement of another I can present no kind of evidence that will have the least chance of convincing him. But I can at all events show him some reason to think that his own attempt to make mankind alter their moral valuations is of the most hopeless and quixotic character.

It has been the assumption of writers on moral questions from Plato and Aristotle to Herbert Spencer and T. H. Green that man has essentially social instincts binding him to his kind, and that the impulses to which these have given rise are as much a part of his nature as the possession of a heart and lungs. The assumption has been strikingly confirmed by those recent psychologists who have been the most thorough-going in empirical methods and who

have applied on the widest possible scale the instrument of comparison. Those who have essayed the task which Nietzsche thought so urgent and hitherto so neglected,—that of 'describing the forms of morality' —testify with one accord to the instinct of gregariousness as being part and parcel of the psycho-physical equipment of the race. And from man's social nature there follow his social impulses. Nietzsche was no doubt entirely right in tracing many of our ethical valuations to what he scornfully called considerations of utility for the herd.

The moralist who has been psychologically trained never proposes to obliterate a fundamental or a genuine impulse of human nature. He aims at regulating it, at directing it into its proper channel, at correcting its perversions. Which impulses are genuine or fundamental and which spurious or casual may be difficult to determine: but it is a merit of recent psychology that they are being determined with increasing precision: we are no longer in any real doubt as to whether social or anti-social tendencies are the more natural to man. I do not for a moment imply that moral theory is equivalent to a mere enumeration of social instincts; these must be subjected to criticism, to evaluation; and I have elsewhere argued that the critical instrument is not the feelings but the reason. Every impulse however must be given its place—not one must be explained away. The task is analogous to that of the physiologist: perhaps a better sort of machinery than the nervous system might have been devised as a medium of communication between man and his surroundings. Physiologists however accept as given the nervous system that we have: they do not write books suggesting means of altering it and recommending some-

thing better in its place. And moralists who know their business take the instincts of the race as their material, asking how far and in what way they may be turned to use, but never entertaining schemes for their radical transformation.

For our author however no enterprise is too vast. "I am not a man," he says, "I am dynamite." Humanity may have been fashioned as a gregarious animal but "Zarathustra" and the "Genealogy" are going to teach humanity differently. The psychologists may object that the plan is impracticable. The answer is ready: "To the devil with all psychology." It is true that as a result of man's social nature he has sympathetic and benevolent tendencies towards his kind and in particular towards its weaker, its more helpless, and its more afflicted members. These feelings enter with many others into the structure of what the world calls its "moral experience." But a new dialectic shall show us that all these things are contrary to the Will to Power, and when we have learned the lesson our experience will be switched into a fresh line.

It is commonly supposed that moral phenomena precede moral science in the same way in which the life of plants precedes systematic botany. To such a principle Nietzsche is utterly hostile. There are no moral phenomena, he exclaims: there are only phenomena morally interpreted. And he looks upon the interpretation as false:—

> "In every 'Science of Morals' hitherto, strange as it may sound, the problem of morality itself has been *omitted*; there has been no suspicion that there was anything problematic there! That which philosophers called 'giving a basis to morality,' and endeavoured to realize, has, when

> seen in a right light, proved merely a learned form of good *faith* in prevailing morality, a new means of its *expression*, consequently just a matter-of-fact within the sphere of a definite morality, yea, in its ultimate motive, a sort of denial that it is *lawful* for this morality to be called in question —and in any case the reverse of the testing, analyzing, doubting, and vivisecting of this very faith."[1]

If the phrase "moral phenomena" offends there is no need to use it. It cannot be denied that mankind attach values to conduct—different values to different sorts of conduct and to the different dispositions of which such behaviour is the expression. These estimates may be—no doubt often are—wrong in details, even in considerable details. What Nietzsche gravely proposes to do is, however, not to amend them, not to search for the underlying principle that explains and unifies them, but to change them root and branch. He can do so only by operating upon the instincts which are correlated with them. And he might as well speak of deflecting Neptune from his orbit or accelerating the earth's rotation upon her axis.

If there is one fact that is plain in the history of the moral sentiments it is that we are more altruistic by far than were our forefathers. In particular we are more merciful, more eager to help those who are unable to help themselves. The horrors of war are nothing like what they once were: and the spirit of philanthropy has disclosed itself as surely and unambiguously in the multiplication of hospitals as the spirit of commerce in the multiplication of mills.

According to our author this is all wrong.

[1] "Beyond Good and Evil" (Levy's Transl.), pp. 104–5.

Granted: but it has come to stay. The growth of civilization from its savage beginnings has been the growth of social integration, and the anarchical individualism of Nietzsche or of anyone else can do nothing to arrest or to divert it.

I cannot put the case more strongly than by remarking that to bring back the days of pre-Christian inhumanity is as hopeless an enterprise as Nietzsche's other project of reversing the democratic movement. In so far as his devotees presume to draw any invidious distinctions among the phases of their master's thought his defence of the aristocratic principle seems to be singled out for special adoration. Aristocracy was never made so ridiculous or its claims so effectually burlesqued as in the essay entitled "What is noble." The most violent democrat could ask for nothing more propitious to his schemes than that his opponents should drink deep of inspiration like this. That which we might conceive as being spoken in the ear in closets—in the council chamber of some oriental despot with a turn for speculation — Nietzsche has proclaimed upon the house-tops. The great man should rule, not as Plato taught, because it is good for the small man that the great should rule over him, but simply and nakedly because he is a superior being and superior beings are to be pampered. A host of menials will enable the despot to rise to a "higher"—that is to a more luxurious, and a more aggrandized life.

Again I ask what has been the movement of history? If pretensions of this sort may be truly said to have become more hopeless with the lapse of every decade of the last century of European progress what is the moral? As the Pyramids rose higher and higher by the labour of a nation of slaves,

and as the artistic life of the Pharaohs was thus nurtured and strengthened the moralist even then protested. Has his protest been growing weaker or has it been growing stronger? And as he has carried with him the whole force of civilized opinion and has progressively translated his protests into action by legislative reform will it suffice to send the moralist along with the psychologist "to the devil"?

It cannot surely be too strongly borne in mind that he who would influence human nature must act along the lines of human nature itself. You may appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober but you must beware of invoking the help of someone who is not Philip at all. You can correct the disorders of the body in the light of what you know of the organization of the normal body: but you need not attempt to improve upon the normal body itself. And one would be just as sensibly employed in cursing the nervous system as in cursing psychology or moral experience. In either case he is a theorizer in difficulties who has lost his temper with an intractable material.

III

The admirers of Nietzsche claim on his behalf that in the idea of the Superman he has merely worked out the implications for morals of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, and they suppose that their master's ethic is entitled to the authority that is conceded to the doctrine of evolution in general. And although Nietzsche spoke of Darwin as 'an intellectual plebeian like all of his country' it would undoubtedly transform the position of the school if it could be shown that their way of regarding ethics is

an integral part of Darwinism and its corollaries. But while points of superficial resemblance are not wanting, and while the Superman is sufficiently similar to the evolution goal for us to recognize the Spencerian conception of which it is the caricature, the points of difference between Nietzsche and Spencer are of enormously greater significance. Spencer was certainly not free from that radical vice which Nietzsche notes in all mankind before him—the fault of "accepting morality as given." If a theory of ethics could be shown to be in irresolvable conflict with the moral experience of mankind, to condemn as irrational sentiments and aspirations which have persisted through the ages and have won practically universal admiration—that seemed to Spencer a *primâ facie* reason for suspecting the theory. It was by no means a sufficient refutation. The theory might be right while all mankind besides were wrong. But while it was not on that account to be summarily rejected it was at least to be re-scrutinized. Spencer is everywhere at pains to show that the actions and feelings which win approbation are, generally speaking, such as evolution properly understood will vindicate. Not so Nietzsche. One sometimes thinks in reading his books that if he detected himself giving unconscious support to an *accepted* opinion he would straightway set about repudiating it. The discordance of a theory with common belief and practice is never to his mind evidence against it but rather most potent evidence for it.

And in truth Nietzsche had no title whatever to claim for his own fanaticisms the support and sanction of Charles Darwin. In the well-known Romanes lecture of 1893 it was argued by Huxley that if the moral code is to be formulated in terms of evolution

then the ideal of conduct is sheer and unrelieved egoism. He contended that for evolutionary ethics the milder virtues must be dismissed as possessing no 'survival value,' for the 'fittest' is identical with the 'best' and if natural selection is to have her perfect work then every type of altruism is an obstacle to moral progress. His conclusion was that ethical man is not a mere product of the cosmic process but demands explanation by other categories. From the same premisses Nietzsche infers something very different. If sympathy and charity and self-sacrificing devotion to humanity are inconsistent with and impediments to the free working of the evolution process as it struggles to bring to the birth a stronger and more masterful race, then these spurious virtues must be swept aside. If the moral consciousness is dissatisfied as it watches the savage struggle for life

> "Where he shall take who has the power,
> And he shall keep who can"

then so much the worse for the moral consciousness. It must be trained to a fresh point of view: it must be fed upon the conceptions of the Neue Moral until it has learned to exult as the weak are made weaker and the strong grow stronger.

But, as Spencer had no difficulty in showing, this line of thought means an utter misreading of evolutionary ethics. For those very milder virtues which evolution is alleged to condemn are themselves products of evolution, and are readily explicable (for anyone who believes in evolutionary ethics in general) if one takes account of the struggle for existence not only among individuals but among communities. For altruism as a principle of internal cohesion imparts strength to the tribe just as egoism is of value

to the individual. Moreover the period during which the thoroughly egoistic man has an advantage, even in the struggle for his own life, is a passing period in human evolution: as society emerges from the militant into the industrial stage other qualities acquire survival-value.

If the attempt of the Nietzscheans to infer from Darwinism were capable of proving anything at all, it would prove not that the altruistic impulses are bad but that by this time no altruistic impulses exist or that if they do they are a rapidly disappearing element in human nature. If evolution cannot produce them but works constantly against them how are they here? Still more how comes it that they are so far from disappearing as to be actually growing stronger and wider in scope throughout the evolution process? It is idle to lay the blame of this on those who have interfered artificially with the working of natural selection. Are not the impulses and motives by which this interference was prompted themselves products of natural selection? And can we deny survival-value to those qualities which were present in some degree in the most primitive tribe, which have steadily grown both in intensity and in extensity as social integration proceeded, and which have reached their highest point in the most stable and the most firmly knit civilizations that the world has yet seen?

Thus the most clear-sighted of the exponents of evolutionary ethics will lend no countenance to the Nietzscheans. But even if they did how far would this help to make out a case for the "transvaluation" which is being urged upon us?

Suppose it could be proved that there is an opposition between the tendency of the cosmic-

process and the strivings of the moral nature. Suppose altruistic virtues have a struggle to maintain themselves in a world where natural selection gives the advantage to the selfish. Would it follow that we should assimilate as far as possible our own behaviour to the type set for us by cosmic forces? Even if the universe is developing on lines which will sooner or later leave no room for the milder virtues why should we seek to accelerate so odious a consummation, however inevitable we may have come to regard it? Should we not still believe that justice and benevolence, truthfulness and chastity are of higher value than their opposites however short-lived their prevalence may be amongst men, and however immoral the goal at which we are fated one day to arrive? The fallacy which is implied in such an inference is wide-spread. It may be called the deification of natural law. When Zeno prostrated himself before inexorable fate and turned the world-reason into an object of devotion; when the greatest of the Antonines wrote in his "Meditations"

> "Everything harmonises with me which is harmonious to thee O Universe: nothing for me is too early or too late which is in time for thee:"[1]

when the Mohammedan soldier has bowed his head with the words "It is the will of Allah; the will of Allah be done": and when Herbert Spencer claimed divine homage for that Power of which he could say nothing except that it is for ever unknowable—they one and all displayed a resignation that was not without its sublimity. But there is far more insight into the meaning of our moral nature in the impatient demand of Mr. F. H. Bradley that before he adores

[1] "Meditations of Marcus Aurelius," iv. 23.

either the universe or the power behind it he must be given some ground to believe that his adoration is not misplaced. He will not worship that of which he knows nothing or of which he knows only that it wields irresistible force. What could be blinder than an apotheosis of the universe as such? what could be more dishonouring to that moral nature which is our most sacred possession than to undertake to fashion it after any similitude moral or immoral in which the world-process may come to be conceived by advancing science? Whatever may happen to us in outward fate our moral nature is surely autonomous in the sphere of inward valuation.

Nietzsche's literary activity ran through many volumes and there is not one from which one might not select similar paradoxes. Absurdities abound, or perhaps I should rather say variations of a few absurdities, for von Hartmann's phrase "ein paar dürftige Gedanken" is thoroughly appropriate. Perhaps his philosophy of religion is on the whole the most diverting. It is gravely endorsed by the writer of the introduction to the new English translation which is edited by Dr. Oscar Levy: he even singles this out as one of his hero's conspicuous merits:

> "As 'the first psychologist of Christianity,' he has successfully accounted for the anomalous phenomenon of the Christian religion—the special embodiment of slave-morality—by showing that it is an artful device, consciously and subconsciously evolved for the self-preservation and advantage of the inferior classes of society, who have thus, to the detriment of the race, gained an abnormal and temporary ascendancy over the better class of men, to whom the mastership belongs, under the sway of the

normally prevailing pagan or master-morality which favours the advance of mankind."[1]

Comment is superfluous. This paragraph is a fair measure of the intelligence and of the historical insight of the Nietzschean enthusiast. That Nietzsche himself should have viewed Christianity so is not astonishing: but that a serious critic with even an elementary training in the Science of Religions as now understood should quote him here with approval and admiration reveals to us the extent to which this fanaticism has gone. As Professor Pringle Pattison truly observes: "A theory which proposes to explain the growth of the altruistic virtues as the result either of an underground conspiracy on the part of the enslaved and oppressed in general or of a devilish instinct on the part of outcast Jews in particular hardly calls for criticism."[2]

Wherever Nietzsche refers to the Christian religion at all he preserves the same level of historical penetration and, so far as the resources of his native tongue will allow, much the same level of abusive language. If in the former quality he is so jejune that he very quickly bores us, in the latter he is copious enough to tickle the most *blasé* appetite. Of Christian morals he knows nothing except in the form of mediæval asceticism: of the Reformation he has nothing more illuminating to say than that it was a "low-class movement": of the argument for immortality which is grounded on the moral consciousness he speaks in terms which imply crude misunderstandings of which the least philosophical writers in the anti-theistic press would by this time be ashamed.

[1] Beyond Good and Evil. Translator's Preface, p. xi.

[2] "Life and Opinions of Friedrich Nietzsche" in *Contemporary Review*, May 1898.

It gives one no pleasure thus to draw out and dwell upon the incoherences and contradictions in the work of a man for whom we have the strongest possible reason to make sympathetic allowance. We cannot understand Nietzsche at all unless we bear in mind the circumstances which made the last twelve years of his life so unspeakably tragic. Of the disease which in the end claimed him and which held him in so mercilessly prolonged a grip he was giving, as anyone may see, no obscure or ambiguous tokens during a great part of his literary career. That he had a dash of wild genius and a brilliancy of style no one doubts; that he had at no time a cool and balanced mind I should think his most careful critics are now agreed. But it is just such a mind that is wanted for the scientific study of morals. We do well to be distrustful of "ethical seers." Like Coleridge and the ghosts we have seen too many. Let anyone turn over the pages of Nietzsche's autobiography—a book to which he gave the characteristic title "Ecce Homo,"—and judge for himself the state of megalomania which is there revealed. "Why I am so wise," "Why I am so clever," "Why I write such excellent books," "Why I am a fatality" —such are the headings of the chapters in which he discloses to us the secret of his own greatness. The man who wrote like that in 1888 was well on his way to the collapse of 1889.

But a criticism which would otherwise be disagreeable and ungenerous has been rendered necessary by the aggressiveness of the Nietzschean devotees. They are insisting that those who care for ethical and social problems should attend to the words of wisdom in "Zarathustra" and in "Beyond Good and Evil." And apparently there is a section of persons

to whom these books appeal—those persons who are permanently at war with everything whether good or bad which has the disadvantage of being respectable. The situation is somewhat analogous to that period in the early Roman empire when those who had abandoned the Roman cults turned with frantic enthusiasm to the religious importations from the East. They would have no dealings with Jupiter, Juno and Minerva but they were extremely hospitable to the gods of Egypt and Syria, especially to those that were adored with an elaborate ritual. If it were not a human necessity to have something to worship we could not easily understand the attempt to localize in the Rome of Augustus the rites of Isis and Serapis.

When mankind cease to believe in morality they will no doubt seek out many a weird invention. Possibly they might as well turn Nietzscheans as anything else. In the end it would be a question of temperament, and although I think that for my own part I should try everything else first I am not Nietzschean enough to claim for my personal tastes any authority over the tastes of others. But in this country we are showing little sign of giving up our faith in the moral order. The soil is unpromising for those foreign gentlemen who are endeavouring to operate upon our minds. We are not impressed by their epigrams and still less by their hysterics about British insularity. The effort to prove that Nietzsche's autobiography was the work not only of a sane but of a supremely gifted and philosophical mind will leave most of us cold. Despite Aristotle's μεγαλόψυχος we do not sympathize with the great man who both knows that he is great and says that he is great. And after all Aristotle himself has left us no self-

disclosure that remotely resembles "Ecce Homo." Even that phrase which we are told is such a pregnant one "The Transvaluation of Values" turns out in the hands of its author to be pregnant mainly with nonsense. In itself it may mean anything or nothing: if the new standard be sufficiently subjective the transvaluing of values is one of the grounds which make a man certifiable for restraint, and the process as any alienist can testify proceeds apace in every asylum in the country.

There is one aspect of what I have called the "Cult of Nietzsche" in which it seems to me that positive danger is to be apprehended. The new-born Science of Eugenics is beginning to force itself upon the attention of social reformers. We are all becoming impressed and alarmed by the problem of city slums with their accompanying physical and moral decay. And we shall not be able to close our eyes indefinitely to the prevalence of what is known as "Race Suicide." It is a healthy sign of the times that we are taking up the scientific study of these matters and are framing with that tentativeness and caution which are so essential in such a field schemes for remedial legislation and, still more, schemes for the education of the public conscience. Eugenics Societies are springing up over the country and the open sore of our social life is for the first time being probed.

There is a tendency in some quarters to speak of Nietzsche as a kind of patron saint of this reforming enterprise. The physical improvement of the race or rather the arrest of physical deterioration is an aim which is verbally similar to the Nietzschean quest for Superman. But I earnestly hope that the Eugenics Societies will not allow their movement to be confused

with the fanaticism which I have been considering in this essay. Cautious persons who know how easy it is to do more harm than good by a rash zeal are sufficiently distrustful and suspicious of what these Societies are aiming at. The wisest among the Eugenics leaders are emphasizing the principle that sympathy for the generation that is to come will never be enlisted by men who show themselves unsympathetic to the generation that is here. If so the less they say about Nietzsche the better.

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